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THE A. M. E. ZION QUARTERLY REVIEW

The A. M. E. Zion Quarterly Review

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P. O. Box 146, Bedford, Pa.

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A. M. E. Zion Quarterly Review

Season's Greetings

HOW GOOD it is to hear the refrains of the beloved Christmas hymns, coming to us as gentle and soothing echoes of heaven to our souls. They cause our hearts to throb in accord with the universal joy of all good people everywhere. It is with this feeling of rejoicing and good will that we offer you our best Holiday wishes. May your Christmas celebration be one that will long be remembered for its happness and good cheer . . . . and may the New Year bring to you peace and contentment.

The Season's Best Wishes

We take this method of getting around an almost impossible task of wishing all our subscribers and friends a Very Merry Christmas Season and a successful New Year ahead.

We are constantly made aware that success, or even a reasonable facsimile of success, comes only because of the inter-cooperation of groups and people. In this respect, we are in full knowledge of the part played by those in executive positions within our denomination, our readers, our writers, our publishers, and the individual members of the Gazette Publishing Company. We are cognizant of the fact that producing a magazine in these times brings its peculiar type of challenge, not only from the standpoint of readying the printed word for the mails but from that of economic problems as well.

The A. M. E. Zion Quarterly Review comes to its readers' desks simply because we have had the sympathetic concern of every person charged with even the smallest task, and coupled with this concern has been a neighborly type of good will which allows for the surmounting of major obstacles. For this type of Christian fellowship and cooperation the Editor is humbly grateful. To one and all, therefore, our sincerest good wishes for this Holiday Season.

David H. Bradley

THE CHRISTMAS STORY

Since becoming Editor of the A. M. E. Zion Quarterly Review in 1948 we have attempted to follow a set pattern in bringing material to meet needs to our readers in all parts of the country and in Africa as well. One of these major aims which we have attempted to meet has been that of a full appreciation of Christian Art. We have felt that this was needful since art enters so much into the building and remodeling of churches. For example art glass windows can tell a story beautifully or in such a fashion as to create confusion in the worshipers' minds. Just any art is not Christian art and the mere glorifying of church personalities can reach a dangerous stage.

Christmas, now for the third year, has been our focal point simply because we have thought that so much commercialization has taken away from the true meaning of the season. Like Easter, its religious significance is very vital to the church. We have therefore attempted to bring to our readers art in three interpretations on this season of the year.

Our readers will recall that in the 1948 (Number 4) issue Mrs. Reeves brought to our attention THE CHRISTMAS STORY IN ART. Paintings used at that time were: The *Annunciation* by Henry Owassa Tanner (son of an A. M. E. Bishop); *The Adoration of the Shepherds* by Giorgione; *The Adoration of the Magi* by Jerome Bosch.

After an interval of two years we resumed this unique interpretation of the Christmas Story by utilizing Chinese art. This number (1951, No. 3) came to your desks during the Christmas season last year. Paintings used included: *No Room In The Inn* by Lu Hung Nien; *The Birth; Visit of the Magi* by Hsu San Ch'un; and *The Flight Into Egypt* by Lu Hung Nien.

This Christmas, in keeping with our Foreign Mission theme we have succeeded in getting copies of African Paintings and wood carvings which appear in this issue. It is hoped that our Mission groups will make full use of these efforts on our part to stimulate interest in the world-wide communion of Christian Churches. It is our personal feeling that prejudice can never be eradicated so long as there is not a mutual feeling of admiration of one culture for another. This has been one of our highest desires in presenting the interpretations of Christian Art to our readers.

We have been deeply indebted to Mrs. Florence Turverey Reeves who has written these articles and supplies these features for the A. M. E. Zion Quarterly Review.

Many of these pictures are available in colored slides. If you are interested in their purchase address the Editor of the Review.

THE MADONNA AND CHILD

(Picture on Front Cover)

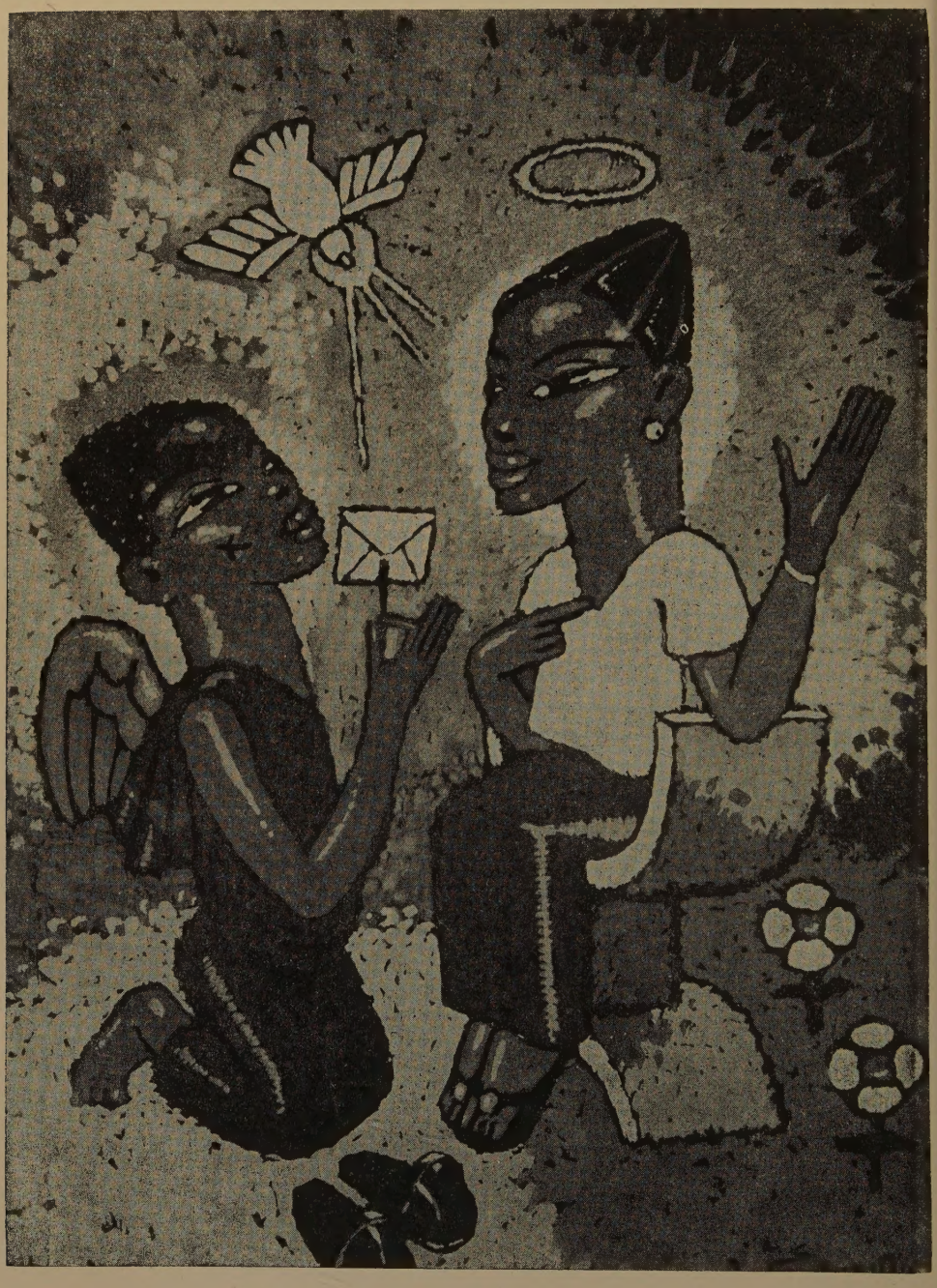
by a Contemporary African Artist

What was once a tree-trunk is now a glorious representation of the Madonna and Child. It has all the sweep and dash of modern technique, yet its faultless pure beauty puts it on a par with any of the old masters.

The sculptor is amazingly skillful at his work. There is no decorative effect merely for the sake of embellishment. He has been frugal in the use of line. Observe the curve of the nimbus of the Mother, the flow of the veil and the arrangement of her hair. The circular cap on the head of the Babe and the nimbus behind it carry out this linear arrangement. The capable hands of the Madonna, long and full of strength, are balanced by the folds of her mantle.

The Madonna and Child both have definite African features with heavy eye-lids, thick lips and broad noses, but the inward creative imagination of the sculptor lifts it completely above racial characteristics. This woman is the Universal Mother. As she holds her Babe close to her heart, he seems a part of her and this somehow reveals all the loyalty and love lying at the core of life. Added to this, we are keenly aware of the instinctive faith of a child in its Mother. This combination creates supreme beauty and projects Divine love and harmony in visible form.

Such a presentation of an African Madonna by an African scupltor expands our perception and makes us ever conscious of the familiar yet mysterious and exalted love of Mother and Child. It brings a mood of self-surrender, devotion and stillness into our busy lives and transports us across the boundaries of our cultural patterns into the boundless spirit of Christ's love.



THE ANNUNCIATION

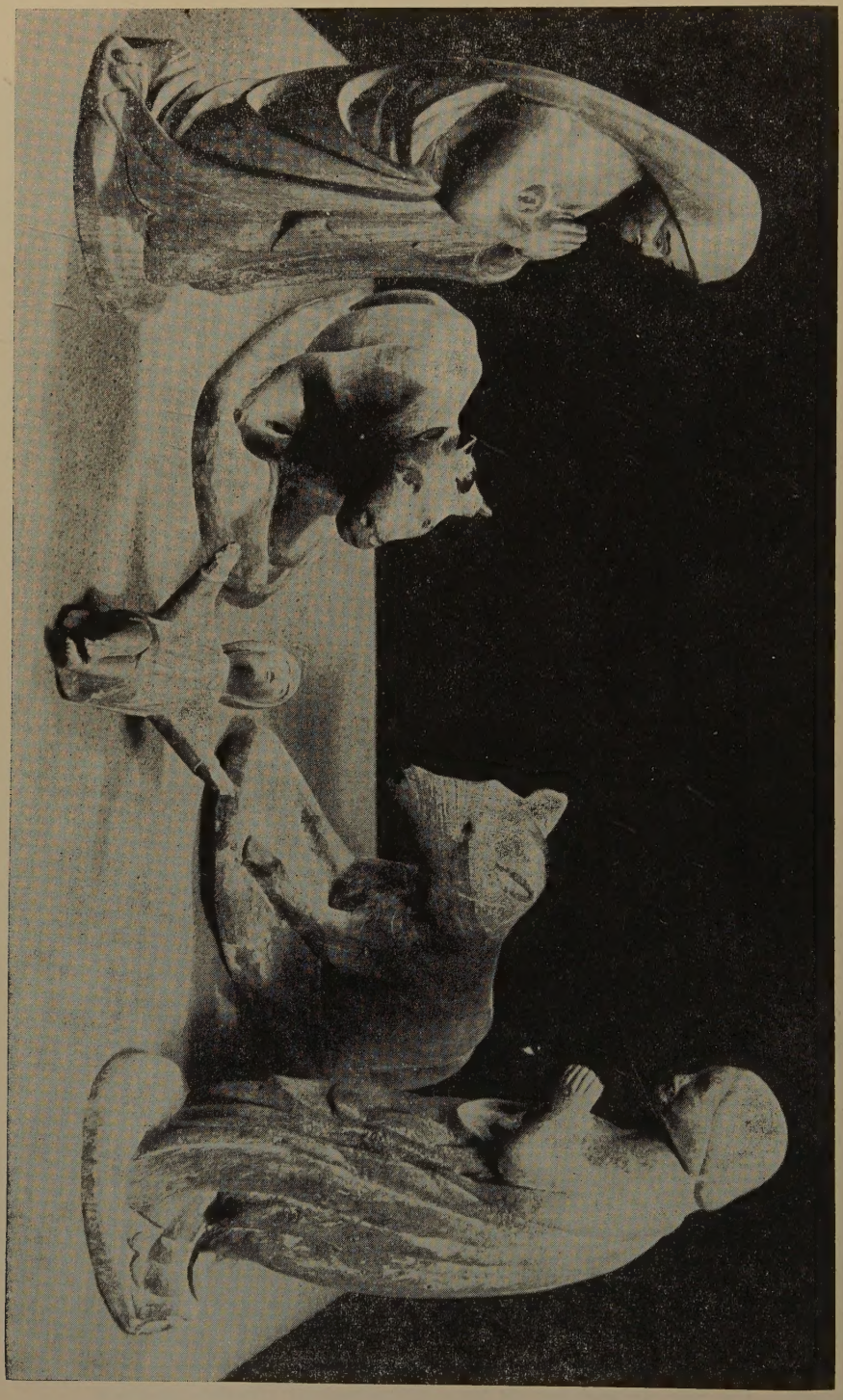
An African painter must be something new in a land where sculpture has held sway for hundreds of years. This one has taken on the methods and the manner of the modern Western artist as shown by his distortion, the method of his working technique and the gay brilliant color evident even in the black and white reproduction.

The Virgin Mary is seated beside the wall at the end of the garden walk. Two large petaled flowers serve to indicate that it is the flower garden and not the vegetable garden. This is an important distinction since the vegetable garden is so prominent in an African woman's life. The chair seems very modern but it is actually taken from the designs of carved African seats used for the Chief or other persons of importance. The artist has stream-lined it giving it a distinct present day touch and almost an ecclesiastical one as well. The wall behind makes a fine backdrop on which to silhouette the figures in the areas of light.

Observe the shape of the heads. This peculiar form is repeated in the lap of the angel, in the lower skirt of the Virgin and in other ways also. The many prominent little parts in the hair of the Virgin is a reflection of the way unmarried girls in some sections of Africa like to arrange their hair in pretty patterns. Mary is wearing ear rings and a bracelet while a fancy buckle holds the straps of her sandals together. One might expect Mary to be wearing many more ornaments since African girls often wear much jewelry but in keeping with the humble person of the Virgin, the artist shows deliberate restraint.

The angel Gabriel is just as African as the Virgin. The artist has even given him a tribal mark upon his cheek. Before kneeling, he has removed his sandals as many Eastern people do in the presence of holy people or in holy places. The artist has pursued realism to its logical extremes here in presenting the message by letter. Are not messages today sent by letter? Observe how carefully Gabriel carries the letter in a holder split so that the letter is held firmly. It is the word of God and must be handled reverently. We understand the message within to be associated with the Holy Spirit by the long ray reaching from the dove toward the envelope. Gabriel looks steadily at Mary, in an impassive manner, as though to ascertain her attitude and answer.

Instead of revealing facial expression, the Virgin shows her surprise by dramatic gestures. With one long finger she points to herself and with the large flat hand upraised she seems to be saying, "How could you be bearing a message for me?" Although the letter is still unopened and the message still unknown, from the intense light about Mary's head and the twinkling nimbus descending from above, the artist intends us to imagine the preparation the Holy Spirit has already made in her heart for the acceptance of the heavenly message. He has created for us an atmosphere of Divine intuition.



THE NATIVITY

This has the atmosphere and feeling connected with the early works of art which we call "the primitive." This term refers to the time when artists and sculptors had broken away from the stiff stereotype work of Byzantine art and were struggling for freedom in line and movement. Their work was new and vital with unlimited possibilities of expansion and growth but they had not yet reached the polished perfection of artists of the Renaissance. In this Nativity we see much the same characteristics of that early day. The figures are heavy and bulky and one is not aware of form underneath the robes. The drapery, while graceful, is in massive folds and the rough surface also seems to say "primitive". The Babe is a miniature adult and the animals are without the naturalness of later times.

This sculptor has received his ideas from Western culture and even though he is African, very little of African is to be found here. The people are not African types but the animals do seem to have a vague touch of the wild beasts of the forests and plains. It would appear that this sculptor has deliberately tried to stick to historical accuracy for he, too, lives in the 20th century, a scientific age which calls for truth to facts. As we look at this scene, if we did not know better, we could easily imagine it to have been done by one of the early Italian masters.

In spite of that, and perhaps because of it, the sculptor has woven the divine and the earthy together. The Holy Child is the center of attention and all four figures turn toward Him. The expression of the animals is unusual. The ox looks up as though in sympathy or compassion for the Child while the ass shows the curiosity of observation only. Joseph kneels slowly and reverently, folding his hands in adoration. Mary, too, kneels and folds her hands in loving worship. There is a smile upon her face as she contemplates her Son given in such a marvelous way.

The Babe, prone upon the floor, stretches out both hands, one to each of His earthly parents as though calling them to Him. Even now, tiny as he is, He would appear to take in all the world as well as His parents, reminding us of his later words,

"Come unto me all ye that are heavy laden and I will give you rest."

THE ARRIVAL OF THE MAGI

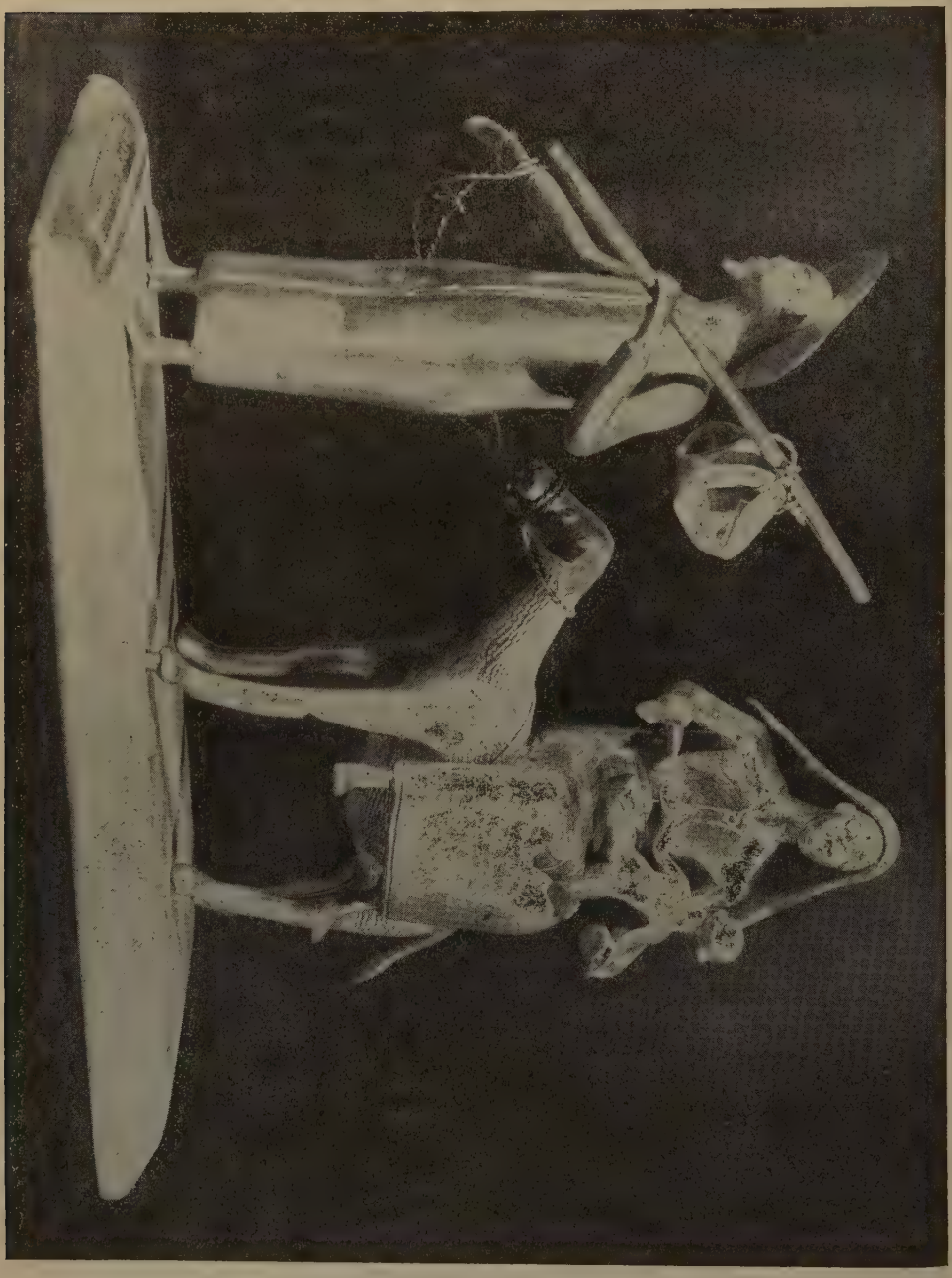
by Ondo Ilorin from Nigeria.

If the group of the Nativity has little of Africa in it, the three figures of the Magi depict Africa with a vengeance!

The three Wise Men are so encumbered and weighed down with African trappings, one at first may experience a certain bewilderment in recognizing them as the Magi. The creator of these figures is blessed with unlimited imaginative powers and has presented the Magi as quasi-incredible, utterly delightful African dignitaries. This fantastic conception reveals a striving for basic understanding of reality by an effort to show the riches and exalted position of the Magi as reflected in African tribal ideas of wealth. It likewise carries a feeling of deference, profound respect, and even veneration as the three men wonderingly approach the Christ Child.

According to tradition the youngest Magus was an Ethiopian and the sculptor keeps to that idea. He gives all the men the same features, yet only the central King is dark of skin. Interestingly enough the white men are dressed in the same tribal raiment as the African King. All three have many strands of beads about their necks, but the African King has at least twice as many as the others. All are wearing home-spun robes of African design and color and all carry handy shoulder traveling bags. Those of the first and third King are of tooled leather, and the central one appears to be of woven raffia or palm leaves. All three are no doubt characteristic of various parts of Africa as well as Nigeria. The head-dress with the cross on top appears to have been copied from the biretta which high-churchmen wear in ecclesiastical religious processions. The cross is always an interesting symbol when used in the representations of the birth of Our Lord because at the time of His birth it was not yet connected with Him. The King on the right wears a ceremonial tribal head-dress with a colorful bird perched at the apex but it is left to the Ethiopian King to surpass them all with the large three-pointed head covering, reminiscent of The Trinity. Observe the inverted heart in the central point.

The gifts, too, are unique. As a present to the newborn Babe, the first Magus carries a scepter in his right hand and a great bowl shaped into a setting hen in his left. Gold, the first gift, standing for Christ's Kingship is indicated in the scepter. Supposedly inside the bowl there would be coins of gold. The third King carries a feather fan sometimes used to brush away the flies and insects. The carved African figures in a kneeling position with arms upraised to balance a large basket on his head is a gift of African workmanship, typical of things found in the African villages south of the Sahara Desert. Frankincense would be inside the basket, symbolic of Christ's Priesthood. The African King comes riding upon a white horse whose harness is tooled in bright and fancy patterns. Many Western artists depict the Magi as arriving upon camels, but here we have one King only upon a white horse. The youngest Magus is said to have brought myrrh as a gift, symbolic of the death of Our



Lord. Instead of myrrh, this African King carries a scourge over his shoulders, reminiscent of the flagellation, and of course, symbolic of suffering.

The Christ Child is not presented here, yet we are certain that the three Magi are looking straight at Him. Their focus is upon a central point, their solemn faces and dreamy eyes reveal the reverence and awe streaming from their hearts. They are fully aware that they are in the presence of the Divine Child whom they had traveled far to find.

THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT

In the Flight into Egypt, we have a representation modern in the extreme and depicting most vividly what must have been the inner anxiety and fear of Mary, the Mother.

Both Mary and Joseph are clothed in the same nondescript long garments buttoned from top to bottom but the Babe is without any clothing whatsoever.. Perhaps the sculptor wants to suggest by this the haste with which the group had to flee from their home.

The contrast in the attitudes of Mary and Joseph is striking. Mary's bulging eyes and worried expression show her to be extremely nervous and she has passed some of this tension on to the agitated, wiggling Child. On the contrary Joseph plods along serenely, without apprehension, as though he had not a care in the world. The pathetic little bag of their belongings hangs near the end of Joseph's walking-stick which he has slung over his shoulder for easier transportation. It is another suggestion of the haste in which they responded to the warning of the angel.

The African type appears particularly in Mary who is definitely an African woman. In her present state of alarm and near-panic she is anything but beautiful. This is no doubt a true and authentic note but in great contrast to the way Western artists present her as poised, tranquil and beautiful, even in flight.

The little donkey plods along most unhappily as we can tell by his ears so completely dropped, giving him a dejected and discouraged air. The genius of the sculptor manifests itself very subtly by tying together the unperturbed Joseph, the distraught Mother and Child and the docile beast of burden by the simple device of a rope strung from Joseph's protruding hand to the neck of the donkey and going off into space as it were in the animal's oustretched tail. The illusion of unity is inescapable and conveys a strong spiritual tone.

The Christmas Story in Chinese Art (A. M. E. Zion Quarterly Review, Vol. LXI, No. 3, 1951) was delicate, fragile, exquisite in workmanship and pleasing because of its fineness and grace.

The Christmas Story in African Art is genuine, vigorous and robust. There is an appreciative recognition of modern methods, of African types and of inner psychological moods totally lacking in Chinese Art. The reality of the African presentation evokes an emotional responsiveness in us which draws us closer to life as it is lived.

AND MARY PONDERED

By Margaret T. Applegarth

Several years ago this presentation of the Christmas Story came to the attention of the Editor of the A. M. E. Zion Quarterly Review. Mrs. H. B. Dwenger, attending a meeting at which Miss Applegarth spoke felt that the style used was one which would delight anyone who was privileged to hear it. After repeated investigations Mrs. Dwenger had to acknowledge that she could neither locate the author, Miss Applegarth, or a copy of the presentation. In the last issue of the *Review* we not only had the good fortune to get in contact with Miss Applegarth but we were able, through her kind permission to reprint the story: THE GREAT GRAB for our readers. Immediately the matter of the little story AND MARY PONDERED came to us and we requested permission from Miss Applegarth to print the story. She wrote us that the story was now included in a collection in the book: RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW!—and that we had her permission.

The book, RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW is published by Harper and Brothers ($2.75) N. Y. Elsewhere in this magazine we have listed the book with the hope that many of our readers will purchase a copy not only for this little story which has a unique worship service presentation but for still another one on Joy To The World. For additional information see Looking Ahead in Books in this issue.

Among this poore folk there dwalt a Manne
Whome that was holden poorest of them Alle;
For High God sometime senden can
His Grace into a littel ox's stalle.

(Geoffrey Chaucer, 1340-1400)

She began pondering early. For there had always been much that was puzzling. The angel, for instance. That simple sentence changing the silence of a spring morning into a moment of imperishable beauty: "You are to be the mother of the Saviour!" As if sudden fragrance filled the room—for that had been the dream of Jewish maidens from time out of mind; and now it was quite settled in the plan of God, and she had been chosen. She! Here indeed was cause for pondering: would it mean palaces? courtiers? ceremonies? chariots, crowns? gowns?

"My soul doth magnify the Lord," she sang; and womanlike, it was half ecstasy and half daydream of how little inconspicuous nobodies would be lifted to high places.

And then—that stable! Nothing had prepared her for such an innkeeper, overpleased with his important guests and literally brushing such lovely trav-

elers off his doorstep with a hasty: "No room! No room!" Nothing had prepared her for the stable; cattle and straw and mangers were shocking substitutes for the cushions and servants and material comforts she had dreamed would ease her weariness. Above the lowing of the cattle she would hear the soft complaining of the doves with their immemorial moan: "Ah God! Ah God! Ah God!" As Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart, she must have echoed this sad amazement of the doves, while still believing in a grander tomorrow.

But before that morning arrived, certain shepherds came stumbling in from the fields, where they had been keeping watch over their flocks by night. They stammered out a marvelous story of angels chanting a message of good will that they had come to see for themselves.

"It has begun! His fame has started!" But Mary must have looked at them a little disillusioned by their clumsiness until she suddenly remembered another shepherd—her own ancestor, David—and then she accepted their bashful awkwardness with sudden understanding. Of course! How perfect! She was a country girl herself and knew perfectly well about shepherds. They had plenty of time to think things through. So this story would become a part of their conversation with every shepherd they met.

From pasture to pasture, all up and down the gentle hillsides the fame of her Child would spread; so that all His life there would be these faithful bands of clean outdoor followers to count on. Palaces were full of pettiness and jealousy; womanlike, the more she began pondering on shepherds in her Boy's life, the more she began accepting them.

Nineteen hundred Christmases later, I read through the gospels with strange concern: what happened to those shepherds anyhow? Why are they never mentioned anywhere again? Neither in later chapters, nor by other writers? Did they forget the midnight message? Is it possible that they were so provincial that a Baby, whose parents moved out of their neighborhood, hardly seemed to matter? Was their tender adoration only a nine days' wonder? Did the heavenly music completely fade from their minds? In their lonely isolation, did none of them while away a silent night by humming the haunting melody until another shepherd caught the echo, and all through that valley the message of peace sounded on and on among men of good will?

Later, after the Wise Men came, Mary's pondering undoubtedly took on an exhilarating mood: This was more like it! Such rich presentable personages arriving from immense distances on account of a new star which actually stood over the place where her young child lay. All that gold! All that frankincense! All that myrrh! How humblly they offered it, as if the Child were indeed the answer to all their scientific search. In her mind's eye she could see other great astronomers arriving and arriving and arriving throughout the Boy's life—for did not the Wise Men "go home another way?" Was it not

natural to suppose that they would startle other men of science into starting on other pilgrimages? But at least, along the two routes the Wise Men had taken, there would be all those groups of interested wise folk remembering the Boy: "Now He is ten"; "Now He is seventeen"; "Now He is old enough to rule; let us go back and join His new Kingdom!" In all her ponderings, surely Mary counted most upon the Wise Men. Persons of such weight could convince anybody! If only they lived nearer, to convince the scribes and Pharisees; but, further off, she could visualize many a dim and distant place with its nucleus of eager worshipers.

Yet nineteen centuries later, I search the entire New Testament in vain for any sudden arrivals from far places: what happened to the Wise Men? Did they never tell anybody else? Or were their words so completely lack-luster that not another scientist ever cared to see the Star Child? When Paul and Barnabas and Peter began to travel, did they never come upon a town where everyone said, "At last! At last! We have believed all our lives, so do tell us the latest news!" It would almost seem as if, having marked their Q. E. D., the Wise Men forgot what manner of men they were, and sought some other curiosity.

You will agree that Mary must have pondered in some terror over Herod and her flight into Egypt; for with the piercing cry of other innocents in her ears, she must have held her own Innocent close in her arms. Piece by piece did she spend the Wise Men's gold on that breathless journey? Then bit by bit, the frankincense? And then the myrrh? When all was gone, were the modern Egyptians gentler people than in the days of Moses? Or did Egyptian carpenters complain that this new Jewish refugee laborer was ruining their trade? There may have been a Sabbath morning, with no synagogue in all of Egypt, when Joseph worshiped at home, repeating from memory (with a masculine attempt at comforting Mary, perhaps) a story in I Kings, the 14th chapter, to prove that all things happen more than once. For in the days of David, this own ancestor of Mary began killing every male in Edom, causing a little royal child named Hadad to flee Edom to Egypt. Yet even loving-kindness could not give the only thing which exiles hunger for, in spite of the house which Pharoah gave them, in spite of the food, in spite of plenty of land. Hadad was hopelessly homesick through all the long years in Egypt; and when he heard that David was dead he begged to go home. Then Pharoah asked: "But what have you lacked with me that you want to go back?" "Nothing!" said Hadad, "Nothing! Only do please let me go home!" And if Mary never pondered before, she pondered then: Her Boy must never never grow up to cause this ceaseless round of cruelty, but could she ever make Him really understand? If all things happened more than once, would He too some day drive men from home into this hopeless wandering? She heard the doves overhead, in their age-old plaint: "Ah God! Ah God!"

But across nineteen long centuries sounds a Voice more joyful than theirs:

"I go to prepare a place for you . . . that where I am, you may be also . . . many mansions in my Father's House . . . I will not leave you comfortless . . . let not your heart be troubled. . . ."

Quite suddenly, doing my own pondering, I see that this is the tenderest gift imaginable for innkeepers who will arrive, embarrassed; for shepherds who cling inarticulately to the safety of the sheepfolds of earth; for wise men who go home another way and keep silent every inch of the trip; for exiles whose houses here may be mere rubble—the ceilings mixed up with the cellars,—yes, this is indeed the gift of gifts—"back to my Father and home."

It is therefore disturbing to recognize in myself another innkeeper, preoccupied with important people; another shepherd, very local-minded in this large-scale world. Those shepherds in the Year One heard their startling message only once, but Christmas after Christmas the song of peace and good will reaches me, and there is no contagious sharing of its loveliness, nor is my name in any of the newer chapters in the Acts of the Apostles now being written. It is bewildering to discover that alhough I may know more about stars and suns than the Wise Men knew, I too have been contented to kneel under the Star, offering a few gifts, and going home another way—silent, Christmas after Christmas. New flights into Egypt keep passing my house daily, new Innocents are killed in every country on earth, new refugees next door are eating their hearts out in loneliness, but December 25 arrives with no word of the Everlasting Mercy on my lips, and no gift of the Imperishable Beauty in my hand.

Pondering, womanlike, it occurs to me at long last that instead of keeping Christmas this year, why not let Christmas keep me? For Christmas is not just a moment for remembering a little Child. It is a movement for following a magnificent Man. It is not a holiday, when nobody works. It is a Holy Day when the spiritually unemployed can begin work on this Man's neglected business. It is not a day for a shopkeeper's gain, but for a pew-holder's gift. And this gift is not to be wrapped in gay ribbons. It is to be incarnated once more in a human body: the body of a shepherd, good enough to give his life for lost sheep; the body of a wise man, wise enough to lose his life in telling somebody else what he has discovered in Bethlehem; the body of a refugee who sees that we are all homeless and restless until we rest in Him.

During the last General Conference the question was raised concerning the traveling of the Editor of the A. M. E. Zion Quarterly Review. The expense for travel listed by Dr. Dancy may be of further interest in this respect.

Travel, Second Year	$163.80
Travel, Third Year	148.95
Travel, Fourth Year	103.20

One of the most respected magazines entering the minister's study is **Church Management.** Because of its work the Christian Education Department of our Church cited this periodical at the General Convention on Christian Education in Richmond, Va. We would hope that more of our ministry were numbered in the subscribers of this church paper for within its covers are many articles which aim at the solution of problems many of our churches have. With Church Management's permission we are reprinting the article, which follows (Church Management, January, 1951) because we so sincerely feel that too many of us may not have had the opportunity to read or scan it:

THE SEVEN SCOURGES OF THE RURAL CHURCH

by Philip Jerome Cleveland

A rural pastor, a distinguished writer, a careful observer, here tells you what is wrong with the rural church. We commend this article to all who will follow the 1951 Home Missionary emphasis on the town and country church.

I hate to see deathbed scenes made public. Thousands are. The saddest sight in the world is the spectacle of a dying church, stricken beside the roads, its last agonies exposed, no prayers said for its peace, no hand to administer last rites, no physician to give anaesthetic. And remember, that Mother Earth gave birth to twins when she bore the United States; church and state were simultaneous deliveries in the same cradle.

If our country is threatened with extinction it is from within, not from without. Russia does not menace our religious liberties; Karl Marx imposes no threat. Our own selfishness, indifference has toppled the proud, crucial towers of democracy. No faith, neglect—these are our destroyers.

Recently I lectured to hundreds of G. I. Boys at New England College, Henniker, New Hampshire, and while rambling about wooded, beautiful New Hampshire passed whole communities of abandoned, shut, rotting churches. Kenneth Cooper, Town and Country N. E. specialist, told me New Hampshire was particularly hard hit. This Baptist leader said he could show me an old map of my own state, Connecticut, once alive with rural churches; now, in many sections, void of them. As Congregational pastor in Connecticut for twenty years, I have listened to the grim sound of shutting rural church-doors. A tour of eastern Connecticut is graphically revealing.

Dr. Mark Rich, national Baptist rural leader, said he believed over seventy Baptist churches had become casualties in old rock-ribbed Maine the past few years. Vermont is loaded with careening church timber.

One New England denomination had some 800 churches some twenty-five years ago; today it has less than 400. Massachusetts struggles with perishing Pilgrim shrines throughout the length and breadth of the land.

Mr. Holmes Rolston, Presbyterian editor, Richmond, Virginia, recently wrote me: "I feel that the problem of the rural church which concerns you is a problem of very vital concern to the whole of Protestantism." And from his friend, James W. Carr, secretary of Town and Country Church Department, Atlanta, Georgia, came this report: "Of course we have the acute problem of the decline of the rural church in the South. The Presbyterian Church

U. S. covers the sixteen Southern States from Maryland to Mexico and Missouri to Florida. The rural church situation is serious in this area, although perhaps not quite as much as in other areas . . . " This spring this denomination launched an "all-out drive" to re-open no less than 2000 closed buildings.

Dr. H. Paul Douglass, author, assisted by Don F. Pielstock, Ross Sanderson, and Richard Myers made a recent report on "some Protestant churches in rural America" to Town and Country Headquarters, New York. It covered special, vital areas in New York state, New Jersey, Georgia, Iowa, Wilsconsin, Utah, Illinois, Missouri. Over forty per cent of these irreplaceable, strategic churches were declining, on the way out. Almost twenty per cent were stationary, static, their life a problem. Six out of every ten meeting houses were dying or menaced by death. This statement took no account of the lapsed churches.

Back in 1934, the Tennessee Education Commission sensed the awful problem and rural life decline; death and this plague of "no-faith" rages throughout the vast, all horizonless areas of the Dakotas, Wyoming, Kansas. Struggling preachers have circuits that kill, trying to maintain little meeting-houses and Sunday schools.

Back in 1937 the bishops of the Methodist Church declared from the flying fortress of their "bishop's Crusade": "Many communities are discouraged and have lost the passion with which we began. We have too much complacency in the face of great moral and religious destitution . . . Too few Christians seem alarmed at the inevitable doom that threatens sacred institutions and the peril that confronts youth . . . Something is demanded to arouse us . . . and break up this distressing state of religious stagnation."

National figures have been released by our Congregational-Christian Churches. Since the year 1894 more members have died out of our churches every year than have been joined to them! And while our national church boasts huge membership lists our rural and town churches "wink out" like lost stars. Yet Connecticut Congregationalism plans an extensive, expensive state building and then cuts down the state aid to our Church of the Broken Bell, here in Canterbury. So the pastor must go into part-time work in order to feed and clothe his family, our fall grant denied. Whither, Protestantism?

July, 1948, Prof. Albert T. Rasmussen stood before the Baptist National Planning Conference, Green Lake, Wisconsin, to say grimly:

"There is a high death rate among rural churches . . . Countless others, which do not die, lapse into insignificance . . . In thousands of rural communities the only churches the people know are little groups, beset by the psychology of struggle and impotency, failing utterly to capture the imaginations of youth or portray the dynamics of a living faith."

We rush around madly to build seminaries in Japan and chapels in Germany while Rev. Harold J. Ockenga scares my mother, as from his great Park Street pulpit (Boston, Massachusetts) he cries over the radio that thousands

and thousands of uninspired churches rot and die at home. Sunday schools fold up and vanish from strategic home mission areas. What is our money doing—doing no better than federal and U. N. O. funds? Don't we grasp the vital problems? Little church, what now?

While ballyhooing for European relief and Pacific enterprise, we have made America a land of lost horizons. We seek to save religion in the world. Lo, it perishes at our very doors!

Aye, members tumble into our churches, to come for Easter and Christmas; we close churches all summer long, while people comb the countryside to find a Protestant door open; the mission sides of pledge-envelopes are ignored and churches perish by the thousands. How long can Protestantism stand such hypocrisy and casualties? We cry "Peace! Peace!" and we stand in imminent precipitation before destruction. We behold brilliant statistics and look beneath, dig beneath to find dead evangelism.

The Sin of Bad Theology

Why, then, have we lost these tall, proud towers of democracy?

First. By a strange European invasion. About the turn of the century not German Nazism, but Germany's scholarship of "no-faith" poured into Protestant seminaries. Thank God the Roman Catholics refused to tolerate this diseased importation of contraband!

Under the impact of these scholars, born out of due time, who thought they wrestled with the angels of revelation and threw them, and mastered Peter, James, John, our seminaries almost became "cemeteries." Cold intellectualism paraded as warm, emotional evangelism. Skepticism promenaded as the great enlightenment.

These seminaries launched campaigns to knock out the faith of the fathers living still from the souls of bright-eyed young theologues. On Pilgrim soil, the Pilgrim faith was scorned, maligned. We swallowed an earlier German invasion "hook, line and sinker." Strange, untenable ideas rooted in pure, beautiful soil; the theological world became infested; germs—hidded in impressive books—tainted the sincere religious air.

It was years before the churches realized that they had been "sold out" at the very top, that the church's foes were those of its own household.

Students and theologues left their germ-laden seminaries to infest the Churches to "secularize" them, to make them admirable societies, clubhouses, dance-halls, pool-rooms, smoking parlors. I have heard these youths say Jesus was only an evolutionary point on the ladder of progress, to be surpassed. What happened? Bible-loving people lifted hands in holy horror and often bolted such germ-laden pulpits, or, taking the very learned preacher seriously, accepted his doctrine and found the church human, no longer divine, and their

Bibles just one more book littering book-shelves. Why maintain a great heroic faith when there really isn't any?

Often religious leaders, state directors worked with the seminaries to select novices of "no-faith" and send them to the most prosperous, rural, small town churches, while older, more spiritual men had to shift about as best they might. Men who had built the church, out-dated, were shoved off on the periphery; the brilliant young scholars of Doubt were given key-altars, to lock them up forever. And so began the decline and fall of the rural church. Have I not seen it? I could quote many instances. I forbear.

Second. These novices who thought the church a school of great enlightenment of "no-faith," soon proved themselves fussy, choosy. Scorning saints and martyrs, they soon revealed their own failings. Men of their advanced knowledge must not be expected to take out-of-the-way meeting houses in tiny communities, nothing under $2500 a year. They must have steam-heated garages and house of colonial beauty. Churches were invaded by men of a price and the great, unpurchasable affairs of the kingdom of heaven began to lose out.

Only faith builds bridges, roads, sanctuaries. These faithless men were crowned kings; the kingdom of God dwindled. The kings passed from one church to another, leaving the churches weaker, by each recurrent ministry. Many good people forsook the shrines of their devout fathers. And many of these preachers, reaching the end of the circuit, and funds dwindling, too, embarked into secular business, colleges, literature, seeking money, fame and glory. They left shrunken, sinking rural churches in their wake!

Denominational Trouble Shooters

Denominational trouble-shooters and efficiency experts finding the churches languishing, proceeded to yoke churches, two, three, four, five. Why impose a limit? To pay any sort of salary individual communities were denied a full-time man and had to rent parsonages. For twenty years I have heard this loud howl about "retrenchment" from editorial chair and administrative office. Dean F. W. Farrar said: "Retrenchment must never begin at the house of God!"

The yoking of churches is defeatism, a slow process of liquidation. One man cannot effectively do the work of two men—except when a genius is occasionally procured. The pastor lives beside the biggest yoked church; that one grows, and the other or others dwindle and enthusiasm dies. "We have no longer a resident pastor," mourn the bereaved people who built parsonages to house preachers, not garage men and sextons.

Any church is a full time occupation for any pastor! Bishop Brooks once told a young man who complained of his small parish: "It is as large as you will wish to give an account of on the Day of Judgment!"

Third. The radio has worked havoc with the churches. Can little rural men compete with the oratorical elegancies of Detroit, Chicago, Boston, New York? When people are told that religious zeal is useless, one must be afraid of enthusiasm (the word from the Greek en theas, meaning *the God within*) and the local church not a vital family of God, watched over by the Great Deacon, the Spirit, people will stay home and worship by radio. Why not? The local church is no longer a divine order. Religion becomes a culture and the country has lost culture. Culture has moved to the city. So why maintain a church? It ceases to become a dynamic life within the community. And country people despise shams.

Fourth. The auto lures parents away from home and the church on Sunday. Parents have become adamant to the challenges of religious training for their young. Mrs. Robert O. Branch, Willimantic, Connecticut, recently referred to the fact that her mill town fathers and mothers were too busy or indolent to drive their little ones to the church school. I was chaplain of the Windham County Jail, Brooklyn, Connecticut, eight years and her mill-town always shipped up the lion's share of bad boys to the jail. "What's wrong with these parents?" she challenges.

I implored a man to send his teen-aged girl to our Sabbath school. He was too busy on the farm. The girl must do chores. Later the girl was seized by the police for juvenile delinquency. Rural areas degenerate. Germs of "no-faith" planted long ago by unbelieving preachers, reap grim harvests.

Fifth. Churches of the past 25 years have not required for membership a deep experience of God and affection for the Master. People must have a real knowledge of God in order to sacrifice automobiles, picnics, week-end parties in order to keep churches open (as Catholics do) and teach little children the way of life. The church in small areas cannot get or find decent leadership. We are pamphleteered to death; books mean little. What we need is a consecrated, God-aware membership, men and women who put children and the knowledge of the Eternal first, last and in-between. Nothing less is vital Christianity. But our deacons, trustees, teachers would rather drive a golf-ball across a green, get a sun-tan, go clamming than teach the Beatitudes of the Master and seat a child in the midst. Fried clams taste better than the sincere milk of the Word.

Sixth. We cannot detour social problems. Many churches have deep-bred, white-supremacy complexes. Years ago I preached in New Haven in a church that had a white-complex. Today this church is a modern laundry, for washing clothes; apparently the challenge to cleanse souls perished. Another high-strutting white church in that same city is owned by a lusty Negro congregation.

Many Pilgrim sites resent the influx of foreign immigrants and displaced persons; they treat Europeans as "cattle" when they come to the manger of

Christ. I have fought this dread thing in New England for thirty years! A famous New York editor told me only this year, that his German Lutheran pastor was ditched, because he was too friendly to the displaced persons and felt the new folks as interesting and divine as the old guard.

Kenneth Cooper outlined a New Hampshire community where, twenty years ago, some forty farms maintained a flourishing church. Today one farm is left, operating as a farm. What has happened? City people have purchased the other thirty-nine beautiful farms for summer estates, hunting lodges, fishing excursions. These summer people are only residents five months a year and do not support the church with their presence. Exit the church!

Seventh. Church leaders themselves often seem to wish to "rub out" churches in some areas, feeling there are too many, when, in various cases, there are not. One time I was without a pastorate in rural Connecticut for over four years and learned, later, of other churches, within a radius of one hundred miles, expiring for need of a man. A man wanting a church and churches wanting a man were kept as far apart as the poles, though only a half hour's journey removed. Relations between pastors and churches need a thorough revision.

Years ago I was called to Boston to enroll as pastor without charge. I was engaged in journalism, to live and feed my four children. It was the post-hurricane chaos. I was asked by an official of the Pastoral Board of Supply what I wanted.

"Any old church anywhere where there is a handful of faith-filled, God-loving people," I replied. The official hummed and hawed a few moments and then asked what I would do if such a church could not be found in the country.

"I will find one for myself," I answered.

See What the Lord Will Provide

Which I literally had to do. For I was told to return to Connecticut and see what the good Lord would provide. That was some twelve years ago and I am still waiting for word from that office giving latitude and longitude of such a little, God-fearing church in the great world of God. Suppose Main Street business men operated on such inadequate programs? Where would the nation's business soon find itself?

However, we cannot fully enumerate the reasons for the decline and fall of town and country churches. The real challenge is to get on our hands and knees and then roll up our sleeves and become men and women again and reopen them. As said David Lloyd George: "The finest eloquence is that which gets things done; the worst is that which delays them."

Can thousands of these houses of God, left to us in sacred trust, be re-

opened? Of course. A church is a public trust. Our fathers built them—not for historic sites. We can hardly keep the clapboards painted! To lose one is a national calamity. It means that another tower of democracy has crashed.

Are we lost, then, and our churches? No.

First, let denominational leaders search their hearts and ask themselves how much they want to re-open these churches. Many poor pastors would give a week's salary to unlock a closed shrine. Would our denominational leaders, our big executives do the same? If so, we could finance thousands of new churches tomorrow.

Then, let our leaders hunt for the truly spiritual family in a church area. Often a denominational house works with a particular family in respect to a church. This special family has been church leaders for a century. But once that family was a consecrated family. The grandchildren, however, have not the faith and zeal of their elders. Yet the state headquarters expects that this one family will organize and run the church if it ever goes. Various attempts are made to re-open the church or energize it, but every new effort is costly and almost useless. In that town or area may be another, not a secular-minded, but a praying, spiritual family, who would have the necessary grit and power and endurance to re-open the church and keep it open. Our leaders often fail to let down their nets on "the right side" of the sea of life and so toil all night, all the century, and catch nothing. Church leaders could learn from businessmen, sales and promotional men; for the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light. Denominational leaders might well spend a solid year on the land, in a church neighborhood, before deciding to let a special family head up the works, in an effort to discover who prays over the church and believes God still operates in a community.

Church leaders must look for men who have a mind to work.

The other day a Gordon College student, Boston, wrote me:

"Where is there a hard place where I can roll up my sleeves and pitch in?"

Thousands of men need only to be challenged to tackle a man-sized job; they accept Carlyle's gospel of work and ask no other blessedness. Find this man, pray until he comes along or you are sent to him, and call him to the rural parish and let him go forth into your rural acres to "plough deep while sluggards sleep." He demands no $3000 a year and free phone, lights, and heaven knows what not! Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses work for years with little or nothing. I verily believe many of our modern, leading denominational students leave seminaries spoiled. They scorn to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ and so beach-heads of the Lord fall to the enemy, an awesome sight!

Also, church people and pastors must demand that state boards spend mission funds on mission churches and not on expansions of literature, subsidizing books, seminars, buying bricks and stones when rural pastors need bread for

their children. State conferences exist to re-open and re-equip the churches. For instance, a church in Maine has to appeal to another denomination than its own to survive. If the Methodists can't help, what of the Baptists? If the Baptists can't, try the Disciples. If the Adventists cannot, how about the United Brethren?

Five years ago my phone rang and a terribly upset woman challenged: "Reverend, can you come to Howard Valley and hold a meeting?" I later learned the little Howard Valley Church was to be sold as a chicken-coop!

Well, we are still holding services in that church, now with a new roof and repairs on the steeple and fine audiences. It is a Baptist church. I also have the Church of the Broken Bell—almost a casualty, now growing beautifully—a Congregational island fastness.

I have had the time of my life taking over two ancient, forlorn crumbling edifices. I have had my deepest experiences grappling with time and fate and two defunct shrines. By the grace and living Spirit of God these two churches came to my attention when I despaired of ever getting a call to another and had entered journalism. Thank heaven for these two burdens, no more burdens to me than wings to birds or sails to ships!

Yes, Westminster called me—five people for five dollars a week. Wife and four children moved over with me into a dilapidated parsonage. Then a second hard-pressed church came down to balance the other shoulder. But I found somebody true who said his yoke was easy and his burden light.

We are faced with many grim challenges, but the grimmest may be that of our dying, stricken churches. I trust my four children will not live to find America without religious idealism and moral beauty. And if we, God's pledged people, don't recommission these sorry looking shrines, who will?

Preachers often work for democracy in a thousand ways, when they can do the most for their country by maintaining churches that are fortresses of faith and hope and love. Like Hitler they spread themselves too thin over boards and commissions and clubs and Granges and little cultural activities.

The *big job* is, forever, THE CHURCH, a full time job and, to me, the only job. Brothers, we need to re-think our vows—on our knees. Said God of old to a leader of his people: "Where is thy flock, thy beautiful flock?"

We cannot save democracy and religion by studying the glorious and heroic documents of the Freedom Train. Hour and engine have forever passed. "New occasions teach new duties." The church is still here, the first cradle of democracy. Study that! Grasp its tremendous, present challenge! Save the rural and small town churches and you verily save the country and "thou shalt dwell in the land and verily thou shalt be fed."

Wrote a famous bishop of the church:

> When nations are to perish in their sins,
> 'Tis in the church the leprosy begins.

I am frank to say that those words will hardly let me rest, by day or by night.

TECHNIQUES OF EVANGELISM

By J. Dallas Jenkins, Minister
Avery Memorial A. M. E. Zion Church, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

INSTALLMENT I—The Pastor's Attitude.

"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus."

It would be indeed difficult, if not impossible to even begin an approach to a Pentecostal experience in the church unless the pastor himself, has come to realize a living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. His christian experience must be more than a sense of duty or of popular expectation. Truly it must be a firm and resolute conviction that there rests upon his shoulders the supreme task of seeking to save the lost. Without this conviction his entire ministry sinks into the category of the professional business administrator. He must believe with all his heart that the entire program, and all the activities of his church, hinges upon the congregation's having a personal experience with the Saviour. No evangelist, no missionary, no christion education worker can accomplish much in a church where this is lacking.

Why are you in the ministry anyway? Is it, as some would lead us to believe, to raise the connectional budget; is it to keep the brick and mortar of houses of worship in repair; is it to be a part of an ecumenical movement which we think worthy of our support in the sociological scheme of things? As necessary as all of these may be they are but the by-products of the element which actuates our desire to preach. Unfortunately it appears that some few of us are in the ministry because of far less worthy motives than those mentioned above. Some for personal aggrandizement; others because of a sort of Messianic-complex; still others because of parental persuasion or family heritage; and some isolated few who believe it to be the easy road to a garden of roses. But, thanks be unto God, there is a remnant who have been divinely chosen, ordained and anointed to "preach good tidings unto the meek, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." These believe that they are viceregents of Christ in the stupendous task of human redemption. They have faith in tomorrow and in the coming of the Kingdom and say to themselves "Woe be unto me if I preach not the Gospel."

Now if it were possible to isolate our attitudes from other areas of our lives it would not be such a Herculean task to evolve the spirit conducive to revival in our ministry. But the sad truth is that all of our actions, nay more than this, our very hopes and dreams reflect themselves in our attitudes toward evangelism. Space will permit us to mention only a few.

I

It would not be fair to presume that many of our brethren are materialists but when we see so many of them who have not the faith to trust God to supply their physical needs, one can wonder if, perhaps after all, we have forgotten the admonition "forsake all and follow me." In a world of crass materialism, which is gold-conscious to its filthy heart, it is not too surprising to hear of ministers with two or three side-lines, involved financial investments and part-time employment. I am perfectly conscious of the need of the dollar and the moral necessity of meeting our financial obligations, but I am no less conscious of the promise of the Master to "prepare a table before us in the presence of our enemies." The evangelical minister must believe in a God of providential care who "will not see the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread." The work of saving the world is a full time job with no annual leave and no paid holidays. If, then, revival is to come, surely and truly, let the pastor first resolve to forget about other business here and now and let him stop his economic scheming in the world of finances and place himself solely in the hands of Divine Aid. "Go into my vineyard and work, and whatsoever is right, I will pay you."

II

What do you do for play or recreation? True the demands of a full-time ministry requires time out for relaxation and wholesome fun. Jesus, himself, when He became tired went aside from the multitude to relax and rest. However it is worthy of our notice that there is no record that The Master ever indulged in the games or sports that were frowned upon by the religionists of His day. The over-taxed, over-worked, over-worried minister may find today ample provision for play and recreation that will at the same time develop moral stamina and spiritual power. Nature, with her babbling brooks and mountain trails; literature, with her poetic genius and light fantasies; music with her mighty symphonies and simple ballads; art, with her tapestries of gold and paintings of enrapturing beauty; athletics, with her challenge to honesty and health and merriment; these and a thousand other related and inter-related fields of enjoyment present countless opportunities for those forms of recreation which will develop the proper attitudes to bring to pass Christ's order in our society.

III

It would be a wise move to decide right now that you have time for small things. The evangelical attitude, as we shall call it, is not clearly defined in the midst of the crowds and the shouts of the multitudes. No more is it developed in the calisthenics of the preacher in the course of his sermon. While it may be true that a state of spiritual mesmerism might be engendered by the "tricks" of the clever psychologist, it does not follow that sound, intelligent decisions for Christ will come out of mass confusion or crowd hypnosis. The

successful evangelist-pastor will be he whom the little child may go to with the quiet confidence that the minister will have time for his juvenile problem; it will be the pastor who has time for the little groups, the small clubs, the scant boards, the "cliques" and the disgruntles of his congregation. In a word, the evangelical attitude, as we interpret it, will be the one that realizes that conversion is a personal, an individual matter—and the minister who does not forget the radical unit, the figure one, is destined to rejoice in the spiritual effervescence of the multitudes. No crowd must be too large and no group too small for the evangelical minister to have the heart and the time to "tell the story," to pray, to smile, to listen, to learn, to share with.

IV

Indeed it should not be necessary to mention the attitudes I am about to note now, for they are altogether incompatible with the office of the minister. But many evangelists have had their effectiveness crippled, if not completely slain, by jealousy on the part of the pastor-in-charge; by the all too prominent superiority complex attitude displayed over the invited evangelist; by the insinuating and sometimes insulting remarks regarding techniques and methods, or mannerisms and decorum (?). It seems almost an unbelievable paradox and yet it is all too frequently true, that a pastor would use the power of his office to belittle or besmirch the efforts of his invited guest in his pulpit. No less disconcerting and discouraging to the evangelist and people is the pastor who breaks into the service at its most spiritual height for prolonged announcements or pleas for money, neither of which have a place in a service of this type. The evangelical attitude must be at all times the attitude of complete endorsement and mutual confidence and cooperation between pastor and evangelist. The spirit of humility is one of the most blessed virtues which Our Lord preached about in His Sermon on The Mount.

As we turn the objective spotlight upon ourselves and begin to ask questions, each light and each question will open the way to others that are related to them. Thus we will find that our very attitudes about Jesus, Himself, begin to change and to crystallize and we, ourselves like unto the ministry that Christ called around himself in lowly Galilee.

Christmas is a time when hearts are opened to the call of need. One cause we would present to every minister at this time. The Reverend S. S. Seay, Secretary of Ministerial Brotherhood and Pension Service, has a pet project which we feel you would be interested in. This year he is attempting to send a small financial gift to the minor child of every deceased minister. I think he states that he has a list of around 80 children. This is the first time we have heard of such a move and being a product of a minister's home myself, it certainly appeals to us. Our donation is going to that FUND. WILL YOURS?

REVIEWING THE PAST

(from Vol. XXIV, No. 1)

The Scriptural Idea of Wise Men

by Rev. (later Bishop) P. A. Wallace

"Behold there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem to worship him." Matt. 2: 1.

Who these wise men were is a question unsettled yet by historians. They are called the Magi; and these among the Persians were their literati, their philosophers and priests.

Others think they were magicians, dealers in black arts and unlawful practices. Indeed, a careful attention to the Greek seems to substantiate this idea. The same word is used in the Acts of the Apostles speaking of Simon and Elymas, the sorcerers.

Three things we are sure about these men: (a) They were Gentiles, not Jews—showing the universality of the Gospel. (b) They were scholars—learned in the arts and sciences of the times—showing that scholars were the first to do honor to the infant Jesus. (c) They were men from the East, Arabia.

The term *wise* as it relates to man is variously applied. There are two standards,—the world's standard and God's standard. The Scriptures call wise:

(1) Those who seek first the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness. Matt. 6: 33.
   (a) It is always wise to seek Jesus.
   (b) Moses was wise in making his choice.

(2) Those who seek and reccognize God in His providential dealings with the children of men. See Psalm 107: 1-43.

(3) Those who win souls for Christ. "He that winneth souls is wise." Prov. 11: 30. Dan. 12: 3.

(4) The person who is guided by a noble principle, has a lofty purpose and unswervingly pursues it.

   (a) When you cannot do much, it is wise to do what you can. See Prov. 30: 28. The spider is a little thing but exceedingly wise She taketh hold with her hand and is found in kings' palaces.

   (b) The spider never creeps but always climbs. Let your aspirations ever be upward and onward.

SERMONS FROM THE PAST

At least two if not more of our prominent Bishops of the middle 19th century were slaves. Bishop John Jamison Moore and Bishop J. W. Loguen having had a greater opportunity to give us a more complete biography than others, have recounted incidents of slavery that the church should not soon forget. Reading of Bishop Loguen one still has a deep horror of the heartless cruelty of the period. Yet, in his case as well as that of Bishop Moore greater hopelessness would have existed had it not been for the sincere efforts made by the ministers of the age. As we look at their repeated attacks of the system today, we can but admire their bravery and manhood, for in many cases God's man took his life in his own hands in criticizing methods employed by slave owners. Nevertheless, they persevered to the point that the eventual freedom of the slaves became an imperative fact in the conscience of the nation. Perhaps the part played by the church, e'er long, will be a forgotten saga but those who know of the power exerted must, without reservation, place these evangelical messengers high on the list of causes of the American Civil War.

The Reverend Daniel Francis Bradley, my father, was one of those meticulous individuals who was careful to save everything which came his way. For example, he was able to salvage the *free papers* of his father (or grandfather) dated 1836. Daniel, not having been born until 1852, this seems to me to have been a remarkable thing since it must have been necessary for him to show a keen sense of the value of these papers. To make this the more so he often told us that his mother or grandmother (I cannot recall who is was now), was a freed woman, obtaining this freedom at the age of 50 years (beyond that which was thought was the child bearing age). Naturally the child born after this age was free so evidently both my grandfather and grandmother were children of Negoes who had obtained their freedom. Recently another little booklet came to my attention. After many years the cover has been lost and all title papes destroyed but just following the preface are these words, written in long hand: *this old Book was my Grandfather's in* 1858. For posterity we would like to set down here a part of its contents, one of the collection of sermons delivered to slave owners and their slaves by some preacher more than 150 years ago. In this age we could well preach just such sermons and find them mighty appropriate.

SERMON I

Colossians IV: 1

Masters give unto your Servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in Heaven.

If we take but a slight view of human nature, we shall soon discover ourselves to be poor, weak dependent creatures, who, taken singly, can neither

guard against numberless dangers that continually surround us, nor procure many of the simplest and most common necessaries or comforts of life, without some assistance from others. Whence it plainly appears, that, as our chief and ultimate dependence is upon Almighty God, who hath created, and supplies the means of our well being to us; so it hath pleased Him by variously distributing those means into different hands, to make us depend, more or less, one upon another. Thus hath our heavenly Father thought fit to establish the ordinary course of His divine providence for the common benefit of his children:—and thus hath He laid the foundation of justice and equity between man and man, by making each in his several station, conducive to the preservation and benefit of the whole, and, in return, to receive protection and assistance from others.

Hence it is, that every service or help which one man affords another, requires its correspondent return:—and those acts of kindness, and their returns, which are due from one person to another, according to the several circumstances of relations in which they stand, with respect to each other, are called *relative duties,*—These, my brethren, are the bands of society, by which families, neighborhoods and nations are knit together:—by these we are enabled to live comfortably in this world;—and for the due observation of these, are all human laws framed and enacted. Hence it is, that subjects owe honor and obedience to their princes and governors, in return for the protection they receive in the possession of their lawful rights and liberties:—Hence that duty, love and respect, which children owe to their natural parents, in return for the being, support, education and other advantages they receive through their means.—Hence that mutual friendship and assistance which neighbors owe, one to another:—And hence that care, fidelity and honest labour, which servants owe to their masters and mistresses, in return for the wages or maintenance which they give them.

There are, indeed, certain duties of benevolence and charity which carry no visible earthly advantages with them, but rather the contrary—and yet are necessary for the general benefit of society, in which all ought to partake:—such as contributing with our substance, our labours, or otherwise, to the supply of the poor and needy, whether their wants be of a bodily or spiritual nature.—But here, the Almighty, Himself, interposes, and promises the reward in the same proportion, as if the kindness were done to Himself. *He that hath pity on the poor,* said Solomon; *lendeth unto the Lord: and that which he hath given he will pay him again. Whosoever,* saith our Saviour, *shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you he shall not lose his reward.*

How wonderful are the schemes of an all-wise Providence!—How beautiful that disposal of human affairs, by which the particular wants of one are supplied out of the abundance of another, who in turn is furnished with what himself stands equally in need of! How high an entertainment does it afford

the contempulative mind, to view the several degrees of mankind, thus administering to the comfort and necessities of each other, and exchanging the produce of their labours and possessions to the mutual benefit and advantage of each other. And how kindly and seasonably do the divine rewards come in, to stir up men to the performance of charitable and benevolent offices, where human returns are not to be hoped for! Happy indeed, should we all be, it this mutual commerce were honestly and conscientiously carried on by all parties;—and that no evil bias of passion, pride or self interest, were to hinder men from giving unto all that which is just and equal!—But the undue practices of a mistaken, covetous world, often run counter to the kind designs of Providence, and cause that deformed appearance which is too visible in the conduct of human affairs, notwithstanding the sanction of divine and human laws. The plain rules of justice and equity are too often forgot, and wealth and power made use of, as distinctions, to set persons above the ordinary precepts of social virtues. Things are too often judged to be right or wrong, not from the nature of the facts, but from the difference of people's circumstances:—so that what shall be approved of in the behaviour of one, shall be highly condemned in another, only because the first is perhaps a rich or a free man, and the latter a poor man, or it may be, a slave: whereas Almighty God makes no such distinctions for with Him there is no respect of persons:—He looketh upon an action as it is in itself, and the heart of the person who does it: and hath the same reward for those who do that which is equal and just, and the same punishment for those who do otherwise, let their situations and circumstances in this world be ever so different. For, when we die and are laid down in the common bosom of the earth, all outward distinctions vanish, and the rank we held in the world, will be no farther concerned in the question, than whether we have behaved well or ill, whether we have done that which was just and equal in it or not?

Next to our children and brethren by blood, our servants, and especially our slaves, are certainly in the nearest relation to us. They are an immediate and a necessary part of our households, by whose labours and assistance we are enabled to enjoy the gifts of Providence in ease and plenty: and surely we owe them a return of what is just and equal for the drudgery and hardships they go through in our service. This, nature and plain unassisted reason might teach us. But when we farther consider it as a positive command from Almighty God, who is ours as well as their Master in heaven, it must needs receive a vast additional force, and convince us that our want of love and gratitude to these poor serviceable creatures, must be attended with the highest danger: the danger of bringing the wrath and indignation of our Heavenly Master upon our heads;—that great Master, to whom we are as much accountable as they are, and indeed, for more than they can be, because more is committed to our charge;—*For unto whomsoever much is given, of him much is required.*

To speak at large upon all the different branches of the duty of masters to their servants and slaves, and to show in every particular what is just and

equal towards them, would extend far beyond the limits of my present design;—besides many of them are often taken notice of in other discourses, when they fall in with the subject.—I shall therefore confine myself to one, and that indeed a principal branch of this duty, viz. The indispensable obligation every master and mistress lies under, of bringing up their slaves in the knowledge and fear of Almighty God.

To His honor and glory is this attempt entirely dedicated, and His blessing and assistance do I most humbly and earnestly beg, in this and all other undertakings, for the good of the souls committed to my charge, and the advancement of His Kingdom upon earth: To which effect, I request your joint prayers and supplications to the throne of grace, in the name and for the sake of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

And now, dear Christian brethren, let me entreat your patient and candid attention. The cause I am about to plead is that of God and religion,—Our blessed Saviour Himself, who died for all, and *would have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth*, hath a near personal interest in it: as the souls I would now recommend to your care have an equal share with ours in his most precious blood, and consequently are equally dear to him. I may then say, as Moses did when he came down from the mount, with the law of God in his hand, and saw the bulk of the people in a state of Idolatry. *Who is on the Lord's side? Let him come unto me.* And I doubt not, brethren, but all you who are on the side of God and religion;—all you who are concerned for the honor of Christ, and for the promoting of happiness of those souls He died to save, will heartily and zealously join with me in your endeavors to that great and glorious end; and strive to shake Satan out of that seat in which he hath, to our shame and reproach, so long established himself, and to erect the throne and Kingdom of God in its place. This is a cause in which we are sure of God's favour and protection:—a cause in which His glory and majesty are highly concerned;—a cause in which we may depend upon His gracious assistance, and in which His Holy Spirit will go, as it were, hand in hand, along with us.

The indispensable obligation which all masters and mistresses lie under, of bringing up their slaves in the knowledge and fear of God, seems to be but little understood, or however is, in fact, but little taken notice of among us. In order, therefore, to make it more plain, and by God's blessing to stir us up to perform it more faithfully than we have hitherto done, it may be proper to consider.

I. The nature of this obligation.

II. The advantages attending a due compliance therewith.

III. The common excuses and objections which are made concerning it.

IV. In what manner this duty may best be performed, to the discharging

of our consciences and with the greatest probability of success.

And, first, concerning the nature of this great obligation.

The law of nature as well as the revealed law of God, will teach us, that *Masters ought to give unto their servants that which is just and equal.*—Now, slaves are so absolutely in the power of their owners, that they have no property of their own; the whole labor and toil of their lives belonging to their masters and mistresses. Can we then, be said to give them that which is just and equal, if we do not make them a full return of everything which their circumstances and conditions require at our hands?—And when they withhold nothing from us, but spend the whole of their lives in our service, shall we be so unjust as to bestow only the worst and detain the best and most needful articles from them?—It is true, we make no formal contract with our slaves. We purchase them as we do other things, which from the time of sale are absolutely at our disposal. But surely it was never yet disputed whether that very purchase does not oblige us to furnish them with all the necessaries suitable to their condition. It may, perhaps, be said, that they have a maintenance for their labor, and is not that sufficient? Alas! my brethren, this is no more than we bestow upon our horses, our dogs, or other useful creatures about our houses:—we give these a bodily maintenance, and supply them with food and shelter suited to their nature;—and if we know any other wants of such dumb brutes, we would surely take care to supply them, as we do medicines when we know them to be sick or disordered by any hurt, strain, etc. But pray, my brethren, have men and women no farther wants than just what relates to their bodily sustenance? When we have provided for them, as we would for beasts of burden, that is, whatever is necessary for keeping them in health and strength to do our work, have they no other wants worth minding?—And after keeping in repair as long as they will last, as would a plow, or a cart, is what remains of them no more value than to be thrown upon a dunghill to rot, or cast into the fire? Have they not souls to be saved as well as us, and as capable of happiness as ours are? Hath not God the same regard for them? And did not Christ, who died for all men, pay as great a price for their souls as for ours?—If then we provide ever so well for their bodies, and at the same time suffer their souls to suffer through our default, have we not put them off with the worst, and defrauded them of the best and most valuable part of their wages? And how can we be said, in such a melancholy case, to have done that which is just and equal to those who have given us all they had here, and have lost, by our neglect, all the good things they had to expect hereafter?—Nay, have been suffered by us to fall into dreadful, everlasting misery, for want of a conscientious care on our part to prevent it?

It would be a dreadful charge upon the *high and lofty one who inhabiteth eternity (who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will),—the depth of the riches of whose wisdom and knowledge is unfathomable and His judgments unsearchable,* to say that His Providence orders anything without some

determinate good purpose:—or to say of Him *whose tender mercies are over all His works*, that there can be any part of His creatures much less of mankind, to which He hath no particular regard, and whose good He doth not consult in His disposal of them in the world.—We cannot but acknowledge that our slaves are given us for our benefit, and that it is a peculiar favor of Providence that we can be supplied with them in these colonies, where the nature of our business is such, that we cannot well do without them;—And pray, my brethren, shall we have such injurious thoughts of our great Creator, who made them as well as us, as to imagine that He has no views in their advantage in sending them over to us?—Can we be so meanly selfish, or entertain such high notions of the degree of favour we stand in with the king of heaven, as to suppose He intended all the good to us, and none to them?—What have we done for Him, that can entitle us to so extraordinary privileges of so extraordinary a nature?—Or what meritorious services have we performed, that could place us in a rank so much superior to them? If we consult Saint Paul, he will tell us, that all boasting is excluded: If we consult our blessed Saviour, He will teach us, that when we shall have done all those things which are commanded us, we are still unprofitable servants, we have done only that which was our duty to do:—and if we consult our own consciences, I am afraid that the best of us will meet with many heavy accusations of wilful breaches of duty, as well as sad neglect; more than sufficient to convince us that we have, in fact, been very unprofitable servants, deserving punishments rather than rewards.—* Since therefore we have no better claim to God's extraordinary favour, and since it is so plain as he that runs may read, that our Almighty Maker did intend some particular advantage to these poor creatures, as well as us, in sending them among us; let us fairly and impartially examine of what nature this can prossibly be;—or in what respect their condition is changed for the better?

Now, we cannot pretend that they gain much by it in this life: for there is little to be found in their worldly circumstances preferable to what they might have enjoyed anywhere else;—themselves, their children, and the latest posterity being bound up to a state of servitude and the whole produce of their lives and labors bestowed upon their several proprietors,—And say then, my brethren, what other benefit could the Almighty design them, by fixing their lot among us, than to supply the means of securing a better provision for their souls, by sending them into a country where they may be brought up in His knowledge and fear, and instructed in the way which leads to eternal happiness?—Or supposing some temporal advantages in their living among a civilized people, where their lives are secured under the protection of the laws; which (throwing religion and a future state out of the question, is I am afraid, a very disputable point) shall we not be forced to own, that this namely, their happiness in the life to come, is the great and principal one, to which the others are no more than appendages? Is not this a design every way suitable to the tenderness and mercy of our kind creator?—And shall we sit still, as if we

were no more concerned in bringing it to effect?—Or shall we not rather think it our indispensable duty to labour with all our might, that these great ends of divine providence may be accomplished among us, and that these poor people may receive their good things in heaven, since it is plain they cannot enjoy them upon earth?

We are commanded by our blessed Saviour to be merciful even as our Father, which is in heaven, is merciful.—Now the great mercy of God hath been shown to us, in revealing to us the way of salvation, through our Lord, Jesus Christ.—If therefore, we would comply with this great precept, and be merciful, as He is merciful, we cannot surely perform it more effectually, than in showing the same He hath shown to us, by holding forth the light of the gospel to these poor creatures, now sitting in darkness, and in the valley of the shadow of death; and by putting them in the road towards heaven, and guiding their feet into the way of peace, as He hath done to us.

The seventh day was set apart as a day of rest and devotion, not only as a memorial of the creation, but to the Israelites was also to be a perpetual remembrance of their delivery from the bondage of the Egyptians:—Whence the precept of resting on the Sabbath is said to relate to servants in particular; that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou.—And hence they are expressly enjoined to remember, that their forefathers had been servants in the land of Egypt; from whence God had brought them out, through a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm.—Our forefathers were delivered in like manner, by the kind providence of God, from a much worse bondage, even from the chains of Satan and Death.—The Lord's Day, which succeeded to the Sabbath of the Israelites, is a standing memorial of this our redemption, as well as creation; and our servants have an equal title to the benefits of it, as those of the Jews had to the ancient Sabbath.—How much more then ought we to labour, that our slaves may partake of the blessings of the Gospel: and thereby be enabled to enter into the everlasting rest of the people of God, which they have as much right to as we have?

When God was pleased to confirm this covenant with Abraham by the seal of circumcision, he enjoined it with the following words: *He that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations; he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger that is not thy seed.—He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised; and my covenant shall be with your flesh, for an everlasting covenant.* And the danger of neglecting it is set forth in the following verse:—*The uncircumcised man-child whose flesh—is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken his covenant.*—From this we may plainly discover the near relation between masters and slaves; these having the same right to the benefit of God's covenant with our natural-born children; and the obligation of bringing them to it being of equal force with that we are under to our own immediate issue.—The command was given

to Abraham, and in him to all masters, whose duty it was to see it faithfully performed: and the penalty of neglecting it (viz: being cut off from his people, or forfeiting all the advantages the people of God were entitled to) certainly fell upon the owner or master, whenever it happened through his fault; as was the case of Moses, when God would have killed him for omitting to circumcise his child.—Did a Jewish master, then, run so much hazard in neglecting to circumcise his slave, and shall we incur no danger in neglecting to make Christians of ours? Or can we imagine that any work of mercy which was required by the first covenant, is void and canceled by the second, whose foundation is laid in unspeakable mercy, and its fabric perfected by universal charity and love towards all mankind? No, my brethren; this is undoubtedly one branch of that eternal law which our blessed Saviour *came not to destroy but to fulfil.* And if we could but seriously consider, that our want of care in this respect might cut us off from all or any of the blessings or privileges which the children of God have a right to, we would surely be more exact and zealous in promoting the salvation of those bought with our own money, or born in our houses;—and think it as much our duty to bring them up in the knowledge and the fear of God, as if they were our own flesh and blood.

Our slaves are engrafted into our families, like branches or scions into a stock, and can we think that Christ, at His coming to visit us, will not expect to find some fruit upon them? But how shall the branches bear fruit, unless the stock yield them due nourishment? Or how shall the fruit be good, if the branches have received none but corrupt juices? If we, therefore, do not supply them with such means of grace as are in our power, must we not expect that they shall wither and perish? Or if they imbibe none but bad principles from us, can the produce be other than naughtiness and corruption? Whereas, had they been engrafted into a sounder or more kindly stock, they might have flourished and brought forth a fair increase in due season. Let this then remind us of the dreadful sentence pronounced by John the Baptist, and confirmed by our Saviour, that *every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be hewn down and cast into the fire.*

If we are commanded to extend our good offices even to the beasts that perish, and *not to meet the Ox or Ass even of an enemy without bringing it back,* or to see *the Ass* of *him that hateth us lying under its burden,* without lending a helping hand. How much more are we bound to do offices of mercy and kindness to men and women like ourselves, and especially to those who stand in the next relation to us with our own children; and not to see our poor brother's soul going astray, or labouring under the burden of his sins, without striving in any case to help it from under its heavy load, and endeavor to bring it into the right way?

God hath given us an extraordinary authority over our slaves; a power which (except in life or limb) hath very few limitations. Can we suppose that He hath entrusted us with this extensive authority for no other end than our

own temporal gains?—Or shall we not rather acknowledge that it ought also to be used for the promoting of His service, and the prudent enforcing of His commands? We daily pray or ought daily to pray, that His Kingdom may come and His will be done in earth, *as it is in heaven.* And when that prayer is so far answered to us, by the opportunities He affords us, of exalting that kingdom on earth, ought we not then labor with our utmost diligence that the subjects of Satan, may be brought over to the dominion of Christ, and live according to His laws, by a due application of such power, and other means, as His good Providence has thought fit to put into our hands?—If we neglect these opportunities, and make no use of these means; or if we exert this authority only for our own service and take no care of His, do not our tongues give our practice the lie, as often as we say the Lord's prayer? And must we not either deceive ourselves, when we repeat that particular petition, without knowing or considering what we pray for, or play the hypocrite with our God, when we understand the meaning of it, and yet use no endeavors to make it effectual?

It is Saint Paul's precept, that whatsoever we do we should do all to the glory of God. And how can we glorify our heavenly Father, more than by bringing up His poorer children, whom He hath committed to our care, in His knowledge and fear? Or how can we dishonor Him more in this world, than by suffering them to remain in utter ignorance, and the practice of such abominations as are highly offensive to Him, when it is so much in our power to do otherwise?

Christians are called a Royal Priesthood, and Christ is said to have made us Kings and Priests unto God; to set forth us both the reward and employment. If, therefore, we would reign with him as kings in heaven, we must serve him as priests here upon earth; not only by offering Him the spiritual sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, but by doing the office of spiritual instructors and teachers in our own houses, and preparing the way of the Lord in the hearts and affections of our children and servants.

Servants are directed by Saint Paul to adore the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things.—Are masters, then, under no such obligation?—Hath God given them so much greater authority, such vast advantage of power and means above their servants, without requiring a proportionable care in the use of this power, and these means?—If each servant by himself is commanded in all his behaviour to demean himself so as to be an ornament to the religion he professeth, is it not plain, that masters and mistresses equally bound to see that their families be so regulated, at least, as to bring no reproach upon that holy doctrine they have received from God their Saviour? But how this can be done without proper instruction, or how can Christian practice be, where Christian principles are wanting, I must own I can not comprehend. It is certain, that wicked people of any sort, reflect a great dishonor, both upon the family and profession they belong to:—And people are very apt to judge of the principles of the master, by the general behaviour of the servants; though after

all they may be much mistaken in both cases.—But it must be allowed, that a general misbehaviour among the servants belonging to any family, is a shrewd sign of a want of good discipline in their superiors.—If therefore we have any due regard, either for our own credit or the honor of that holy doctrine we profess, we will surely not only endeavor in our own persons, but also in the instruction and regulation of our servants, to be an ornament to our profession, and a blessing to those whom Providence hath placed under us.

It is really a melancholy reflection that in a country like this, where such numbers of people professing the purest doctrines of Christianity, have been so long settled the Christian religion hath been no farther propagated among its ancient heathen inhabitants many of which dwell in the midst of us, yet remain as much heathens as if the sun of righteousness had not as yet risen upon it, and the light of the Gospel had never reached these distant shores.—So that since my arrival here, I have not so much as heard of a single Indian in this whole province, who is converted to and lives in the profession of the Christian faith.—Is it not a sad and grievous approach, that we have made them no better return for the plenteous land they have given up to us, and the valuable settlement we obtained from them, than teaching them our vices, and introducing luxury, drunkenness and debauchery among them, without any one public attempt, any resolved steady measures taken, for showing them how to be happy indeed, and pointing out to them the way to a far better country than that we have received from them?—But is it not yet a sadder and more grievous reproach to us, that so many poor creatures, whose liberties and very lives are in our hands, whose whole labour is bestowed upon us; who live within our own dwellings, and daily feed at our tables, should be taught little more of our religion, than if they had remained in the Heathen, barbarous countries from whence they were brought for our service and benefit.

If a master or mistress, in a plentiful country, abounding with all the necessaries of life, should keep slaves in a starving condition, without allowing them meat for their bellies, or clothing for their backs, or shelter to lie under; but put them under a necessity of picking up a living as well as they could, without any assistance towards it, or abating any part of their time and labor for that purpose:—would not all mankind cry out shame at such inhuman, and cruel treatment?—And shall not we be ashamed, in a Christian country, where the Gospel is so plenteously shed abroad, to keep our slaves in ignorance and blindness, denying them spiritual food and nourishment to their souls?—Or what amounts to much the same, leaving them to pick it up among their fellow servants, who are as blind and ignorant as themselves, and as ready to fall into a ditch;—or else, to get it, if they can, at church, supposing they could have the grace and inclination to go there of their own accord, and where, for want of some instruction in the first principles of Christianity, nine parts in ten of what they hear must needs be unintelligible to them? If we

were left to our own choice, whether we would perish with hunger, or be damned to all Eternity, and that we were laid under an absolute necessity of doing one of the other,—would we not think it a dreadful case?—For to die of famine is most wretched!—and damnation! it is not to be thought of without the utmost shock and horror! yet surely, the odds are infinitely great: and the least due reflection must needs determine us to the laying down of the body in pain and misery for a short season, rather than to give up body and soul to certain torment and destruction for ever and ever!—Apply this now to the case of our slaves: and say whether it would be more cruel and inhuman in us to let them perish here for want of such necessaries of life as we have plenty of in our hands: or to suffer their souls to starve amidst an harvest of God's word, and for want of that nurture and admonition of the Lord, which is easier come by, and costs less in furnishing, than the meanest piece of clothing they put on?

If our servants neglect or refuse to give us that which is just and equal, the law hath given us power to correct and force them to do it. But if we refuse them that which is just and equal, where is their remedy? In cases which concern their souls, and upon which their eternal welfare depends, there is no earthly court in which they can have redress:—This is a matter in which conscience is purely concerned, and where no human jurisdiction takes place. Masters have all the authority, servants none. *To whom much is given, of him shall much be required*:—And by how much less human remedies are wanting, by so much the more does divine justice interpose.—To whom then are owners of slaves answerable?—before whom shall they account for their behaviour as such, but the Lord of heaven and earth, who is no respecter of persons and who judgeth the cause of the poor and needy and him that hath no helper? If, therefore, we deny to these poor creatures any of their dues, and especially such as relate to their future happiness, shall they not have recourse to the court of God's equity in heaven, where their complaints will be impartially heard;—where masters and servants shall one day appear face to face;—and where strict justice will be done them without the least favor or affection?—*If I*, saith holy Job, *did despise the cause of my manservant, or my maidservant, when they contended with me*:—*What shall I do when God rises up? And when he visiteth, what shall I answer him? Did not he that made me in the womb make him? And did not one fashion us in the womb?* And Masters are directed in the text to give that which is just and equal to their servants, from this awful consideration, that they also have a master in heaven.

Our slaves are so many talents put into our hands. They are God's own property, and entrusted to us by our heavenly Master, that we may make use of and improve them. When, therefore, after a long time our Lord cometh to reckon with us, and inquire what use we have put them to, and we shall say, Lord, we have made them able servants, and have taught them to work in the

fields, and in the house, and to earn their bread honestly by the labour of their hands, and the sweat of their brows; do we think this will be satisfactory? Can we suppose than no more will re required of us? Alas! my brethren, is not this literally saying that we have buried our talents in the earth;—that we have sunk them in our grounds, and used them only as dung and manure to our land and plantation?—And I need not surely repeat, what a dreadful sentence is pronounced against such wicked, slothful, unprofitable servants as lay out all upon this world, and take no care to return our heavenly master his own with usury. If we are profitable, it is only to ourselves and to our worldly affairs; but, in respect of Him, are as absolutely unprofitable as if those precious talents had been hid in the earth, and no use at all made of them.

Charity is so essential to the very being of true religion, that Christianity cannot subsist without it: For which reason, Saint Peter recommends it to us above all things. Above all things, he saith, have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity covers a multitude of sins. As every man hath received the good gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.—And hence it is that in the twenty-fifth chapter of Saint Matthew, (where our Saviour describes that awful day, when he shall come in his glory and all his holy angels with him, and all nations shall be gathered before him, sitting on the throne of judgment), the kingdom of heaven is said to be given as shall have performed works of mercy and charity: such as feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, receiving the stranger, clothing the naked, and visiting and comforting the sick, and the prisoner:—And the dreadful sentence, which dooms the wicked to that everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels, is pronounced upon them for their want of chartity, and neglect of performing these works of mercy and Piety.—If, then, these Acts of kindness, done to the bodies of strangers and poorer neighbors, have such a glorious reward, and the neglect of them, when we have opportunity, drags so heavy a punishment after it, how great must be the reward of saving poor souls, and how horrible the sentence of those that cause, or suffer them to perish! The poor and the needy are Christ's own representatives; they have a demand upon us in His name, for all such deeds of love and benevolence as we have power and opportunity to pay them: And if we slight the demand, we become debtors to God's eternal justice for the neglect of payment. If we then, by being Christian masters, are no more than stewards of the manifold Grace of God, and are required to minister the same to others as freely as we have received the good gift, how shall we look our Master in the face when He summons us by death to give an account of our stewardship?—And what a terrible sight must it be to see a number of these unhappy creatures drawn up against us in judgment witnessing that the loss of their poor souls was owing to our want of care and charity for them, calling aloud for the justice of heaven; and to hear the Judge pronouncing the conclusion of that awful and tremendous sentence, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these my Brethren, ye did it

not to Me. Depart—Depart from Me, ye cursed!

Let these powerful considerations, my dear Christian brethren, sink deep into our minds:—Let them awaken us to a due sense of what we owe our Heavenly Master in return for the blessings and talents He hath put into our hands:—Let them prevail over our prejudices and mistakes and convince us, that it is not only a great but an indispensable duty of all masters and mistresses to bring up their slaves in the knowledge and fear of Almighty God:—Let us not only hearken to them with our outward ears, but earnestly pray that they may be so grafted inwardly in our hearts, as to bring forth, by His grace, the good fruits of Christianity, not only in our own, but in the lives of our poor benighted slaves:—So that we and they may adore the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things while we may remain here, and hereafter, be received as part of His household, into those mansions of endless joy and felicity, which He hath prepared for all those who, under any denomination, or in any station of life whatsoever, (whether master or servant, rich or poor, prince or slave) shall have behaved on earth, as becomes the true and faithful servants of our great and universal Master in Heaven.

Which may God of His infinite mercy accomplish in us and them, by the grace and assistance of His Holy Spirit, for the sake of that well beloved Son, Who went about doing good to the souls and bodies of men, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE TRAGEDY OF DYING BEFORE WE LIVE

"I am come that they may have life, and have it more abundantly."

Delivered at the South Carolina Annual Conference, 1952

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As we reach the age of maturity and recall some of the experiences of our childhood, for which we are grateful, because they have been sustaining powers in our effort to survive in this cosmic ordeal, we naturally have some events which stand out above others. One of my most cherished experiences, one for which I feel most grateful as I grow older is the fact that when I was a mere boy I was one of those fortunate youngsters who had a mother who believed in teaching her children to kneel down beside her and say their prayers. Interestingly enough, I feel that such a gesture is responsible for my firm belief in the power of prayer today. Through the years that one prayer has lingered with me: "Now I lay me down to sleep, etc.," while those words "If I should die before I wake," startled me.

Some years ago I heard an expression from my father, who was broken-

hearted, as he looked at the lifeless body of my twelve-year-old twin brother, who met his death while swimming in Lake Michigan. As he stood there, with tears streaming down his face, he kept repeating: "Why couldn't it have been I?" So impressed was I with the words of my father that they stayed with me even to my sleep-time. One night I awoke with the words ringing in my ears for the impression had come to me that it was I who had passed away. I dreamed that I had died before I had had a chance to live as my father had said.

That is one of the saddest thoughts imaginable. It is doubly tragic in that it is enacted all about us. Many people die before they ever live. They exist, eating, drinking, making merry, but so far as life is concerned they are dead.

The tragedy of death is not death itself, but in the wasting of life; dying before living, before awaking to the real meaning of life, the worth of life, and the proper use of it. William James once said: "The great use of life is to spend it for something that will out-live it."

Life is too beautiful and too full of grandeur and possibilities for one not to find the true meaning of it. We can find this meaning by following the words of Christ, and believing whole-heartedly these words: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

These words dare us to face one's responsibility to God, to enter into fellowship with God through one who has lived through the years as the greatest leader of mankind, not the Christ of History but the Christ of human experience, the Saviour of mankind.

Few of us realize the difference between a life in a sense of existing and that in a sense of adventure in partnership with God. This is the difference between a life and a living. In a living, our concern is the material—occupying space. Methuselah is an example. In making a life, creating a partnership with God the words of Jesus are important when He states: "My Father and I are One."

If men are to live before they die, if they are to have an abundant life, they must accept the challenge of Jesus. This challenge is found in the living of an unselfish existence in a world which takes greed for granted, to have courage in a world which takes weakness for granted. We must accept the dare to live with faith in God and in mankind.

These are challenging times, for we are definitely going through a period of reconstruction; political, economic and social expediency. We are rapidly moving toward that sort of world described by Wendell Wilkie when he declared we must have one world or no world at all. What a tragedy it is when we as Christian people become reluctant to give our young people a chance to live the abundant life in this world before they die!

To live in such a world means that we must facilitate the resources of every institution, the Home, the Church, the School, all as agencies of preparation.

Certainly we are thinking of this world as a type of Utopia, an Ideal World, a World fit to live in. In order to have that World fit to live in we must have *a People fit to live with. A Purpose fit to live for;* and *a Faith fit to live by.*

Let us think then of the tragedy of men dying before they live.

Many die before they learn to live with others. We must learn to live with *self* as a beginning process, based upon the great premise study. Paul used the words: "I have learned—". We cannot overlook the fact that this is a social world and the Biblical interpretation of "Bear ye one another's burdens and thus fulfill the law of Christ" is the cornerstone.

Many die before they learn to live with God. To live with God one must have faith in Him. He who will come to God must believe first that He is, and that He is a rewarder. This is the only faith that is fit to live by.

THE VIRGINIA CONFERENCE

Through the good offices of two of the professors of Hood Seminary we were privileged to attend the Virginia Conference when it was discovered that it was nigh impossible to get across state to the Cape Fear sessions at Wilmington, North Carolina. Professor Harlee Little carried us from Statesville to Salisbury after he had called Dean Satterwhite for us requesting he await our arrival. One is immediately aware of the love and esteem in which Bishop Medford is held. The ministers are not only a relaxed group but they seem to possess a definite sense of wanting to serve, wanting to work. For that reason we can look to great strides in the progress of this conference.

The matter of Madison Temple, a Home Missions project of the conference, came up. It was heart-warming to hear ministers state with so much positiveness their belief in the future. Faith such as this makes sacrifice insignificant.

Bishop R. L. Jones and Mrs. Jones came in during the Educational Service. Again, one is aware of something within a leader which automatically engenders success.

Bishop William Jacob Walls, Senior Bishop of the A. M. E. Zion Church, has sailed for the important meeting of the united church forces in India. We wish for him an informative and pleasant trip.

EDITORIALS

THE EDITOR JOURNEYS

Visiting annual conferences provides no time for writing editorials so the Editor has thought it might be well to jot down impressions as they have come to him in the past few weeks. It has been our good forune to visit sessions for the first time in South Carolina (with Bishop Slade) and Central Alabama (with Bishop Taylor). In addition, we were able to see the Western North Carolina Conference in action for the second time and the Virginia Conference (one of many times). Perhaps in these writings there will be more of information than of profound thinking but in it all we sincerely hope there will be some reading of value.

It's good to visit our brethren in the various sections of the country. One of the great things it does is to lift one's morale. For example: in Rock Hill, South Carolina, the South Carolina Conference was meeting in a recently rebuilt brick church, large and visionary of greater things to come. The Reverend J. B. Roseborough had done a noble task in preparing for the Annual Conference. Incidentally, it is this writer's idea that this moving about of the annual conference sessions does a wonderful thing in stimulating churches. Here at Rock Hill, all the singing, and there were times when three choirs were programmed, was done by Zion Church choirs. And the singing was above the average, too. To hear the a capella singing of one choir sent us back many years to a time when there were few instruments in any of our churches. Another singing group impressed us by the number of young people, girls and boys, in the organization. Still another, was the spirit of cooperation which existed between the groups. It did not matter wheher the choir was from that or another church any choir which knew the number sung felt free to join in and it was *good.*

While we are on the matter of choirs, one other matter impressed itself. At Mount Zion in Montgomery, where the Reverend L. R. Bennett pastors, the choir is never thirty seconds late in the processional. At Petersburgh, Virginia, the same was true, especially with the Oak Street Choirs and that from Metropolitan, Norfolk. Truly, singing aids in a successful annual session and in no place was this element lacking. At Statesville, where the Western North Carolina Conference was in session, two groups from the local and county High Schools joined in with the conference in observing National Education Week.

The South still can boast of its hospitality. When we arrived in Rock Hill, S. C., at 5:00 A. M. we found the minister, Reverend Roseborough up and waiting for us. He had alerted his Preacher's Steward so the bed was waiting too. The hospitality of the parsonage was there too as was that of everyone with whom we came in contact. This desire to please, to take care

of the church's leaders, is something which should not be made light of. Catering to the wishes of the Bishop where food is concerned may seem something not necessary but anyone who travels knows that one can end up in a sick bed quicker by attempting to conform to local eating customs than any other way. To our way of thinking the men are merely showing good sense in looking after the physical needs of their chief pastor. Certainly the office demands it.

The richest element in anyone's life is true friendship. Perhaps that is the reason this journey throughout the South will live so long with us. Every one of our Bishops has his great contribution to make to the church and we saw our friends in action. Throughout it all is sprinkled that leveling spirit of love discernible to those who look for it. Bishop Slade is concerned for the denomination to an extent that he works much harder than he should. He conducts his conferences astutely, with patience and care. All collections were made in the Budget Committee room and work of the session went ahead on schedule. And not only is the matter of an annual conference a heavy responsibility on the hands of a Bishop. His wife, likewise, comes in for her share of the responsibility. There is little doubt that the Bishop's wife must dread these days with the grave necessity for report forms, checking on General Claims and keeping track of pension funds, educational funds and periodical funds. December, for most of them, means a chance to relax and catch one's breath.

As a General Officer one tastes of the deep, rich hospitality of common folk and city princes, of rural ministers and city pastors, of the man in the street who gives you directions and the man in the castle, his home. The opportunity comes to test sincerity, and evaluate friendship, sample minds, some shallow and tiring,—others, profound and directive. One listens to sermons, yes, good, bad and indifferent,—hears singing and music, nostalgic, glorious or, in, cases, just plain boring. He can taste of the experience of much more than his time,—seek the link of that past with the present,—discover causes of men's thinking, actions, and emotions;—see dreams, small and great, in various stages of completion;—visit churches;—see the heart of Zion Methodism, beating staunchly, faintly or progressively;—all in the pleasant roaming over the land visiting annual conferences.

And the General Officer is in school too; for that which happens to him makes him formulate resolutions, even before January first. He resolves not to arrive at the minister's home too early, for that minister, overflowing with desire to serve, may spend the entire night waiting. He determines not to succumb to too much hospitality so much so that his stomach revolts at the extent of the land's bounty. This one is definitely hard to keep for one is keenly aware of the joy the people have in honoring those with whom they serve. One great thing is the memory of the days; all the way from Texas and the minister's heartwarming task of getting up early in the morning to carry water a good quarter of a mile for your use—to Virginia and the Carolinas where the expectant people give of their best.

South Carolina opened its heart at Rock Hill. The joy the church feels at seeing Bishop Slade in action is one of deep, rich satisfaction. Bishops grow to know men and they have the high art of letting you know they love the church. Perhaps it is because they themselves have seen so much, have suffered so much. One sees the worth of long service in the trenches before the consecration to this our highest office, for no Episcopal leader can have none other than the single eye to the goal ahead. And the cross we place on their shoulders is one which is never closely examined by many of us. The task of raising funds to run our denomination, administration, periodicals, Schools and Colleges, Missions, both at home and abroad, pensions, etc., leave precious little time for the constructive thinking their hearts would like to see. It has been a stroke of ingenuity which has brought about a complete revolution in the mode of conducting a conference. At Montgomery where the Central Alabama Conference was meeting led by Bishop Taylor and the Western North Carolina at Statesville led by the Senior Bishop William J. Walls, it was good to walk in on the discussions each morning by leading ministers in wiser and more thorough church administration.

The Negro has always been considered the base of society here in the South and because of that he has become a mighty wise soul in handling white folks. Of course, many might challenge us here but it has been our belief that the Negro knows more about the weakness and strength of his white neighbor than is surmised; and more than is true in reverse. Consequently this better knowledge is used to procure that which is desired. So many times preachers and lay leaders carry this same knowledge into an annual conference and if the Bishop isn't wise he falls victim to the same tactics. Bishop Slade, associated by Bishop Medford, never allows failure to beckon, and schooled as he is in the wisdom of years, South Carolina understands.

Of course preachers have their problems too. Congregations can really enjoy their religion until the time comes for the offering. It is our opinion that even with this great state of evident prosperity church people have yet to actually show their gratitude to God through their gifts. Surely it is the coins capable of buying little in the public market which find their ways to the church every Sunday. A terse examination of the economic condition of the South at present is either misleading or the dew of Christianity has not as yet fallen on the pocket books. Twenty-five and fifty cents is today no indication of a love of Christ.

But one may get the idea that conference visitation is merely surface matter. It is this Edior's belief that the major tie within our denomination is the General Officer. Bishops enter conferences over which they do not preside only by invitation. The General Officer goes everywhere and is well received by every Bishop. It is a foregone conclusion that he has business in every

part of Zion as is certainly true. The Editor cannot write with the aim of fulfilling a need, the Christian Education worker cannot formulate without firm knowledge of the areas, the Financial Secretary cannot devise financial aids without knowing the Church, and so on down the line.

Besides this matter of being a general ambassador of Good Will the General Officer has the fine opportunity of observation. The recently purchased churches in Charlotte, Greeneville Tabernacle and Clinton Chapel, as well as Clement Memorial; the renovated and practically rebuilt churches in Rock Hill, South Carolina, and Ebenezer Church in Montgomery. And then the promise of next year's session: Reverend Beamon's Church in Norfolk, Oak Street Church in Montgomery, both recently constructed buildings. One wends his way home feeling that Zion again is on the march; that a new pattern is being slowly and painstakingly woven in the minds of our chief pastors and on this they are one.

Our joy of fellowship with our chief pastors is overflowing. Tonight Zion can rest secure with those who guide her destinies.

AT CHRISTMASTIDE: Mother Love Surpassed by God Love

By the time this issue reaches its readers Christmas will be upon us and what a great rich season of the year! One major thought comes to the Editor which he would like to pass along—that this season is the high demonstration of the most perfect love the world has ever seen. We experience so much of mother love—we know so well how we must work to keep it the dominant thread of our being that we may lose sight of the God love brought into the world by that little Babe of Bethlehem.

Love is a beautiful increment of life. Perhaps in many homes it is demonstrated by the presence of children, wisely guided in Christian nurture. We see it exhibited in the accounts of our soldiers in Korea where children are concerned. Then there is that never-to-be-forgotten picture of the lad with the new pair of shoes. Child love is in itself enriching but how much beyond this is mother love: . . . And at Christmastide, God reiterates His love through the Gift of His Son.

In 1896 the report on Education listed the following institutions: The Wilkesboro Institute, Palmetto Institute, Union S. C., Clinton, Rock Hill, S. C., Lloyd Academy at Elizabethtown, N. C., Hemphill High School, Crocket, Ga., Pettey Academy at New Bern, Lomax and Butler Academy at Tampa, Fla., Carr Academy in North Carolina, Lee Institute, Amity City, La., Pettey Institute, Calvert, Texas, Lomax-Hannon, at Greeneville, Ala., A. M. E. Zion High School, Norfolk, Va., Lancaster High School, Lancaster, S. C., Greenville College, Greenville, Tenn., Atkinson College, Madisonville, Ky., Jones University, Tuscaloosa, Ala., and Livingstone College at Salisbury, N. C.

LOOKING AHEAD IN BOOKS

Men as Trees Walking

by Margaret T. Applegarth (Harper and Brothers, N. Y. $3.00)

In the last issue of the A. M. E. Zion Quarterly Review a moving story by Margaret T. Applegarth, *The Great Grab*, appeared. Our reason for printing it was based on the desire to stimulate an interest in mission work study. Now we bring to our readers a review of the series of stories as told by Miss Applegarth in her book *MEN AS TREES WALKING.*

To catch the great beauty of Miss Applegarth's stories one must understand her method of writing. This writer was at first mildly disturbed by her repetitional manner, but a close scrutiny of her style and purpose leads one to see the worth of this approach and distinctive style. When one has once read a story there is little doubt of the main characters involved and the purpose of their appearance in the story.

The fact that these stories are all original ones and can delight both old and young make them especially useful in work with the Junior Church or Junior Church Sunday School classes, Youth Mission Study groups and Senior Adult Societies. In this light we have urged experimentation with *The Great Grab* which we feel will lead to a desire for the entire collection of 80 stories appearing in *MEN AS TREES WALKING.* The following comment by Charles Templeton appears on the jacket of the book and certainly says that which we would state regarding the work:

What a rare gift is imagination, and how freely Margaret Applegarth has been endowed with it. To her a Bible story, an historical event, a contemporary happening is not a static fact but a launching platform from which her agile imagination takes flight. Does one think an ancient Palestinian event has yielded to the commentators and theologians all the light within it?—not so until Miss Applegarth has taken her penetrating and initiative look. How often she glimpses meaning and beauty and truth that others have missed."

"A glance through the chapter headings will hint at the originality that makes fresh and fruitful every page. Is the minister prospecting for illustrations to regenerate a tired idea? Here is a mine of fresh-dug gems. Is a jaded reader sated with a prosaic and pedestrian approach to the 'great eternal verities?' Here is new and invigorating fare. Is a confused Christian looking for practical suggestions for every day living? Here are helps that require no glossary to make them plain. Is a person deeply concerned about the great injustices of our inequitable, insular, segregated world? Here is incisive, penetrating insight to inform and inspire."

"Perhaps Margaret Applegarth owes her own intuitive understanding to the fact that she learned to 'be still' in her Quaker quiet-time as a child. Per-

haps she owes her earthly practicability to her present membership in the Baptist communion. It is more likely, however, that she has gained her balanced wisdom and her compassionate understanding in the thousands of miles of travel she had done and through contact with the hundreds of thousands of people she has spoken to in most parts of the world. She has looked into so many lives through counsel and in converse that, in their lives, she has caught a glimpse of the heart of God. Your heart will beat with theirs and hers . . . and His, as you read *Men As Trees Walking*.

By all means read about the 180 children who had an outing which lasted more than two years; the German hausfrau who sent a corps of dolls against Stalin's legions; the "hot potato" that saved a prisoner's life; and the "Joan of Arc" in China who, though dead, converted a General.

RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW
by Margaret T. Applegarth
(Harper and Brothers, N. Y., 1950)

It is a bit unusual that we should review two books in the same issue by the same author but since material from the one has already appeared in the past issue of the the A. M. E. Zion Review and material from the other appears in this number it is felt that readers may desire more information concerning the source of the material. RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW is much unlike the other book, MEN AS TREES WALKING, for it consists of worship services which can find use in many different ways. Certainly they can be of value in organization meetings of an adult nature and can, as well, be adapted to youth groups. We especially see a use for them in Women's Guilds and missionary groups.

Perhaps a fitting introduction to the work can be gleaned from that which is said by others. We quote a few of these statements:

"In this volume, Miss Applegarth provides an unusual amount of fresh and stimulating material which will be exceedingly useful to those responsible for worship whether or not the full worship services are used. This is one of the welcome volumes which stimulate thought and imagination and open new vistas of possibility in worship."—Dean Edwards, Director, Commission on Worship, National Council of Churches.

"Few books have made Biblical and Christian history come to life as this one. The prophets, the gospel writers, and the great Christian leaders down through the centuries speak from these pages to us *Right Here, Right Now!* 'for the renewal of a more redemptive concern in everyday religion.' The book is full of dramatic teaching situations. It is something new and different. It is valuable as a guide in personal devotions and as a resource

for speakers."—Gertrude Harberts, Director of Christian Education, First Church, Burbank, Cal., in *Monday Morning*.

The opinion of Church Management, always a reliable guide is likewise interesting:

"A distinctive volume of devotional materials. In reality, the 28 complete worship services can be used on a Sunday morning in the worship hour—so appealing and truly inspirational, so dramatic and challenging are they. And, they are also easily adaptable to other types of services in either the large or small church. RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW! is a rich contribution to the field of public worship material; it is also as valuable and precious for the heartwarming, personal devotions."—Church Management.

The Editor particularly likes *What Did You Think of the Sermon Today?, Can These Bones Live?,* and *Those Who Feel The Gale of the Holy Spirit.*

And, by the way, what a great use this book could find in the churches of rural communities who want an occasional evening worship service!

WAYS YOUTH LEARN

by Clarice M. Bowman

(Harper and Brothers)

One of the major concerns of our church today is the evangelizing and the retention of youth. The process has become more difficult with the present system of the draft which takes young men especially, away from the influence of home at an age when wrong slants on life are easily promoted. This, coupled with the fatalistic concept with which young people are surrounded, brings other dangers, among them being hasty or ill-advised marriage, a false sense of values, and, in cases, poor preparation for the crises which may arise.

Along with this it appears that a general indictment of present-day parenthood can be made. Neglect, lack of a sense of responsibility, and false ideas of "my right to my idea of happiness' serve to bring about more abandoned, neglected or semi-neglected children than the world has ever seen before. Since this responsibility now devolves on public and private institutions it is in these areas that the church must seek to serve.

Clarice Bowman's book is geared to aid the church leader understand and direct the youth in these times. Naturally it is a book for leaders of youth rather than one for youth themselves. Especially is the book of keen value to church Sunday School teachers and fellowship leaders. The author assumes, and rightly so, that someone must step into the breach of the disturbed family unit: "disruption of family units; increased transiency; increased number of divorces; lowered moral idealisms." We have already mentioned her second premise:—the interruption of normal life patterns and educational

outlook. Added to the dangers are also economic contradictions: the accentuation of the sex problem with its attendant removal of fear of social disease and pregnancy; frustrations, racial and social tensions; confusions as to ethical standards; intemperance and fatalistic concept.

The Editor is impressed with Miss Bowman's down-to-earth approach to problems which are primary ones with every minister. What about God in the young person's life? What about a really basic church program which will endure for more than a few months? Here is a book which will be welcomed on any leader's shelf.

The report of the Honorable John C. Dancy as Editor of the A. M. E. Zion Quarterly Review for the General Conference of 1896 is likewise of interest. His report shows the following was received from July 1892 to July 1893:

From General Fund	$260.19
Subscriptions	310.50
Sales	182.40
Donations	30.50
Total amount received for year	$783.59

Expenses for the same period were as follows:

First Quarter	$136.40
Second Quarter	151.30
Third Quarter	172.80
Fourth Quarter	141.50
Travel Exp.	98.50
Total	$700.50.

Recorded membership of Zion Churches in 1896 is also an interesting item. For example: John Wesley in Pittsburgh (now two organizations, Old John Wesley and Wesley Center) had 300 members. Union Wesley in Washington, D. C., listed 260 members while Pilgrim Rest and Clinton Chapel near Mobile, Alabama, had 94 members. Solomon Temple at West Point, Miss., recorded 28 members while the First Church in San Francisco, Cal., enrolled 190. Other points on the Pacific Coast listed membership as follows: Fresno, 45; San Jose, 40; Paso Robles, 29. At that time Big Zion in Mobile was known at Little Zion and recorded 650 members, but only 370 voted on this question. The statistics from Georgia are likewise interesting. For example, the following points are listed: Mt. Nebo at Hepzibah, 98 members; Mt. Carmel at Waynesboro, 100 members; Jones Chapel at Blythe, 100 members; and Social Chapel at Richmond, 100.

IN AUDIO VISUAL AIDS

CHRISTMAS is coming and with it there is presented a need for audio-visual aids on this theme. As the Editor has said time and time again there is a real need to emphasize the *holiness* of the Christmas season. For that reason there is little doubt that eventually Protestant Churches will be compelled to lengthen their observance of this season to include the entire Advent period. While many of the denominations are rapidly moving in this direction (among them being the A. M. E. Zion Church) there is a sense of urgency in the air for even greater efforts.

Since the films on this period are not only limited but rather hard to book for no dealer wishes to keep too many prints in stock just for these 30 days' use it means that ministers and churches will have to book early if they wish to secure the wanted film.

Another problem likewise presents itself. Many sections of the nation have that which we would call *blind spots* as far as rental coverage is concerned. We mean by that that churches may be more than a few hours rental journey from the agency. This means that unless one wishes to resort to long distance calling, the slower method (and the postal department is not only becoming worse in this category but more expensive) of mail must be resorted to. As soon as possible the Review will begin building up a listing of rental agencies as they are uncovered.

Birth of the Savior

A 16mm sound film produced by Family Films evidently produced in color as well as black and white with the higher rental at the former. Based on Isaiah 9: 6; Luke 1: 26-56; Matthew 1: 18-25; and Luke 2: 1-16. Under Roman bondage, people are taxed. One who rebels is lashed by a Roman soldier. Words of the Prophet Isaiah comfort him.

An angel announces to Mary that she is to be the mother of Jesus. The song of Elizabeth and the Magnificat of Mary are depicted as Mary visits Elizabeth. Joseph is told by the angel to take Mary as his wife.

A decree from Caesar causes Mary and Joseph to go to Bethlehem. The town is crowded and there is no room for them at the inns. An inn keeper can only offer the use of the stable for the night. The baby Jesus is born that night in the stable. Angels announce the birth of the Savior to the shepherds. They hasten to Bethlehem and bow down in worship at the Christ child's manger.

The Guiding Star

Another film likewise put out by the Family Films is *The Guiding Star* Its theme is the true Christian spirit in Christian family living.

It tells the story of Uncle Henry who brings the true Christian spirit into family living as he brings a young mother and her infant into the family circle on Christmas Eve. By cleverly manipulating tags on packages and helping a mother soften up her hardened heart toward her married sons, a family is reunited, a mother and son reconciled, and a general spirit of love is radiated throughout a wholesome family celebration of Christmas. Uncle Henry is able to lead the family into a happy Christian family life experience.

The Guiding Star can be used without hesitation in your Sunday night group for the entire congregation, your youth group or your Church Sunday School. Or, if you desire, we feel it would be good for a mid-week service theme.

CHRISTMAS PARTY STRIP

CHRISTMAS PARTY presents a complete Christmas party in filmstrip form. It features games, songs, contests, stories, and the Christmas story together with a Leader's guide and supplementary material. A 66 frame color filmstrip, CHRISTMAS PARTY is a Church Screen Release.

BRIGHTEST NIGHT

BRIGHTEST NIGHT released by Church Craft is a new color film for Christmas issued especially for children. The story is presented in the traditional family setting where mother and father tell their children the Christmas story from Luke 2 and Matthew 2. As they tell the story, the Nativity story is enacted with colorful miniature characters in specially designed miniature settings, against a background of Christmas music.

The running time for this sound film is 14 minutes.

IMMANUEL

The Concordia Publishing Company is issuing a series of 50 filmstrips the first of which is being issued at this Christmastide. In 35 mm only the price of each strip will be $5. Majestic in scope, in magnificent full-color photography, here is the wondrous story of Christ's Birth beautifully portrayed by some of the finest professional talent available. Combined with many sacred hymns and carols, and special Christmas recitations for the children, IMMANUEL furnishes a complete worship service unsurpassed in drama and inspiration for young and old alike.

IMMANUEL was produced in cooperation with Family Films, and with the collaboration of expert writers, directors and Hollywood's top production technicians. Settings and costumes are gorgeous, and fully authenticated by thorough research. Bible narrative is closely followed. IMMANUEL—timely, beautiful, inspiring and dramatic—is a "must" for the visual aids library of every church and Sunday School.

CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD

"Everywhere, everywhere, Christmas tonight"—and you can celebrate the joyous season with people all over the world through this unique filmstrip. See Dutch children filling their shoes with hay for St. Nicholas' horse and finding candy and toys in them the next morning. In a Filipino home a big lighted paper star is placed in the window. This hanging of the Star is always a festive occasion. In Mexico the boys and girls try to break their *pinata* and get its treasure of toys and gifts. Spain teaches its children to dance and sing around their plaster *nacimiento* to the cheery music of tambourines. In full color paintings Christmas Around the World is a fine added feature to any church's program. The program (recorded) itself lasts 20 minutes. You can order it from the Methodist Publishing House.

THE QUESTION BOX

The question of infant baptism is still not clear to me. Can you give any further light on this subject?

The Editor can merely quote from Bishop Small's *Code on the Discipline,* which, I think, should give you a clear interpretation of the matter:

"One, if not the most important matter of church polity, is the proper attitude that institution assumes in caring for children, therewith connected. On this point the Catholic Church is more judicious than the Protestant, and its wonderful influence from its numerical strength, is accordingly felt. Its motto is, "Give us the children and you can have the others!" It is well to think of what is implied in that idea.

"Sec. 15. It is admitted by the Protestant Church that children being saved by virtue of the atonement, are recognized by the church in the ordinance of the Sacrament of Baptism. They, therefore, claim, not merely the attention but the special care of the church; and it is but wise that their claim be carefully considered by the church ministry.

"Sec. 16. By virtue of their reception of one of the two Sacraments of the Church, it is evidenced that their inception therein is recognized. This brings them into covenant relations therewith, but being in their infancy, parents or guardians are their sponsors, and are therefore responsible for the fulfillment of the covenant by them made at the baptismal ceremony.

"Sec. 17. The church being the custodian of the record of those vows, is not without responsibility for the discharge of its part of obligation, through her ministers and officials; that she sees to it—as much as in her lies—that consistent efforts be made for the fulfillment of those vows; and that she sup-

plements those efforts to the accomplishment of the end in view—the salvation of souls brought in convenant relations with her at Christian baptism.

"Sec. 18. As our church, by its Discipline, as having entered into visible covenant relations with God (through representation) it recognizes its obligation to exercise special supervision in the fulfillment of its part of obligations, and in so doing retains the intended relation.

"To the church the relation of baptized children is that of probationers. They cannot be recognized as full members, for this would subject them to the usual form of church discipline in case of failure to keep the vows with full membership; and this could hardly be demanded when the individual does not recognize having subscribed to such vows. If persons who profess to be followers of Christ do not give evidence of perseverance, it is not to be expected that all children who have been baptized will keep in the path of righteousness. It is therefore reasonable that baptized children gathered in classes for instructions—to be taught the principles of religion—should be considered probationers until they give evidence of having professed a lively hope in Christ. Then, like other members, they should be received into full connection, and will then assume the responsibility of their vows. Probationers imply responsibility, but may be dropped without the form of a church trial; but no full member can be removed from the church roll without a trial, except those absent from city or vicinity where they hold their membership, for a specific time, without corresponding with their leader or pastor."

Small, *Code of the Discipline*, 27-29.

This additional question presents itself. In the light of that which Bishop Small has said; suppose the child (himself or herself) shall request baptism when he assumes these vows which his parents or guardians have accepted in his infancy?

I see no reason why the minister should not comply with the request. In fact, I can see some very real good reasons why such an act can be very meaningful to the individual. We certainly have such symbolic services in connection with Fiftieth Wedding Anniversaries so this surely is in keeping as well.

Bishop Alexander Walters reporting for the Seventh Episcopal District in 1896 notes the following:

At. Auburn, New York., Mrs. Harriet Tubman Davis, who was a spy in the Union Army during the Civil War, and who successfully piloted nearly 400 slaves to freedom before emancipation, has donated to the A. M. E. Zion Connection seven acres of land, a house and barn, etc., for a home for the friendless and worn out preachers in Auburn, N. Y. Through the efforts of the Rev. J. E. Mason the property has been incorporated in the name of the A. M. E. Zion Connection. Very rich and influential friends have signified their willingness to make it one of the grandest homes for colored people in the land.